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TRANSITION.

The passions are a numerous crowd,
Imperious, positive and loud.
Curb these licentious sons of strife,
Hence chiefly rise the storms of life;
If they grow mutinous and rave,
They are thy masters, thou their slave.

* * * * *

Be still, nor anxious thoughts employ,
Distrust embitters present joy,
On God for all events depend,
You cannot want, if God's your friend;
Weigh well your part, and do your best,
Leave to your Maker all the rest.

DR. COTTON.

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P R E F A C E.

PREFACES are very seldom read ; and being, too, at the present time, somewhat out of fashion, I should not write one, but to notice some remarks which have been made to me on different subjects. I have been asked if the elegant tale of the Rev. Mr. Taylor, entituled ‘ Montague,’ did not suggest to me the characters of Mr. Arthur Leclerc and Mr. Alfred. Between the latter and Montague there is a similarity, for the character is a common one, and I have known many such. The ideas for which I am indebted to Mr. Taylor’s work are the reformation of the Oxonian, and the re-

marks on the third class of persons to whom an University life is a dangerous one. As Cambridge is selected by Mr. Taylor, I need hardly say that my knowledge (such as it is) of Oxford and its forms was not obtained from his attractive work. If to have written at all on the subject be thought out of my province, I must plead the example of one who was a talented, if not a truly great, man — Cardinal Richelieu ; who, not content with being known as a statesman, aspired to a poetic reputation. In the remarks which I have made, I believe I have said nothing which is unjust, or calculated to offend any one.

I have been blamed for speaking against the reading of the Bible, and for adverting to some religious sects and principles. If 'motive is all,' mine was good. I would wish the Scriptures to be read, but at a proper time. No one can deny that, as a class-book, used in the middle of the day, the Old and New Testaments are regarded merely as school-books. What I wished to discourage was the promis-

cuous reading of the Bible. Why can it not be read, even in day schools, the first and last hours, Before the miniature business of the day begins, and when it and its trifling cares are closed by the approach of evening ?

The contrariety of religious beliefs (or, rather, forms of belief) has been an argument prominently put forth in the writings of infidels and atheists. They have inferred from such disparity that, as some must be false, all are—but who shall presume to decide ? Are not the words of the Apostle conclusive, ‘ Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons : but, in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him ? ’ My motive, in speaking of them, was to show how wrong it is to let any circumstances shake our belief in a Superintending Providence ; and what misery springs from the boasted independence of Scepticism.

In conclusion, I must protest against this book being called a novel. I claim for it the appellative of ‘ A Simple Moral Tale ; ’ and, if

the reader should find some religion blended with it, I hope it will not be an objection. I did not intend to write a work of mere amusement, or any thing which, at any period of my life, I should regret to acknowledge. I have portrayed, feebly, I know, but honestly, life, as I have found it; as they who live long in the world, or are at all conversant with it, will confess it to be—a mixture of good and evil.

“I have not loved the world, nor the world me,
But let us be fair foes. I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Worlds which are things—hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the falling. I would also deem
O'er others griefs that some sincerely grieve,
That two or one are almost what they seem,
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.”

I can with great truth enter into the feeling expressed in these lines; and this must be my answer to such of my friends as have advised me not to publish this Tale, on the ground of the injustice too often manifested towards

authors. If my walk in life had been less rugged, I might have taken their advice. It is true that I was, in my childhood, 'the spoilt child of fortune,' and, as far as pecuniary matters go, I have reason to be thankful, I 'have something yet;' but the malice that has been manifested towards me because I exerted myself to take care of them who were not able to protect themselves, can never be forgotten, although as a Christian, I am bound to forgive it. To time and their own conscience, I leave some, into whose hands this book will probably fall; and if, as an author I should be successful, it will be but another proof that envy defeats itself. If I had been suffered to remain unmolested in my station, my thoughts would probably never have gone beyond it; but the wisest of men declares a wounded spirit to be intolerable, and when I have been told,

"I had much better put my house in order,
And dress my person, not adorn my mind,
A well made gown, or pretty muslin border,
Were of more use than sonnets to the wind ;

“ Law was the study of the Law’s Recorder,
Divinity the clergy’s, and, as I should find,
The heart was no inditer, and my head
Had brains somewhat resembling lead :”

It was certainly natural that I should wish to ascertain whether this were true. I therefore ‘ would be an author,’ and completed this tale before I attained my twentieth year. I mention this because in the Review of a work, I think by Mr. Godwin, jun., entitled Transfusion, it is stated to be that of a very young man of eight-and-twenty, and on that account entitled to leniency of judgment on the critics’ side. I have made some, but slight, alterations in it, since I first wrote it, and it would have been published in 1835, but from a cautious prudence on the part of my mother, who, having suffered rather considerably from speculations, did not wish to engage in a new one. The late sudden death of her sister, with whose ideas she seldom agreed, has induced her to offer no further opposition to mine ; and the work is therefore published, after being written nearly three years. Of the many characters presented to

the reader's notice, some will disgust, and some will please; if the abhorrence or admiration they excite should lead any to shun their errors, or imitate their virtues, I shall not have written entirely in vain. Should these remarks be perused, before I part with my reader I would add a short admonition, 'Never despair, it is impious towards God, uncharitable towards men, and renders its victim alike useless and unhappy.'

Stratford, Feb. 28th, 1837.



TRANSITION.

CHAPTER I.

MAJOR Manvers, an officer of some standing in the British Army, was, in his private and professional character, respected and respectable. His health was unshaken by the vicissitudes of a military life, his fortune was small, but sufficient for his wants ; his family could count their generations for some two hundred years, and prided themselves not a little on the purity of their ancestry ; his influence was good, his misfortune—a bad wife.

Rosine Jones was a pretty girl, and if she loved any body, or any thing but money, it certainly was the Major, who became acquainted with her at one of those public dancing rooms where so many improper intimacies are formed, where the fortune-hunter and the libertine select their victims, and the inexperienced youth, dazzled by the alluring

glare, becomes the prey of those who, having lost virtue, wear her mantle, more effectually to accomplish their aim. Of this class, Rosine certainly was not one; she was indeed at all times an unwilling frequenter of Mr. R——'s rooms. Her father was the natural son of a gentleman of rank who, feeling that he had injured him in his birth, wished to place him in a respectable situation in life, and one in which he would escape the insults usually thrown upon those who have the misfortune to be born illegitimate. Mr. Jones's employment was respectable and lucrative, and, in his thirtieth year, he married a beautiful, but badly educated and ignorant, woman.

“ Let no man a woman wed
 Whose heart he knows he has not ; though she brings
 A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry
 ————— he cannot trust her :
 She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him,
 The worst of sorrows, and the worst of shames.”

Mrs. Jones did not love her husband: careless of his comfort, she sought only her own; and, as dress and show in her opinion constituted respectability, her expenditure was far beyond her husband's income, and lavish in the extreme. Proud of four fine daughters, she had them educated in the way she herself had been, that was to know how to dress, to dance, to work pictures in silks, and paint on satins, &c. Grammar was nonsense, arithmetic only fit for boys, writing cramped the hand, and reading was not good for the eyes, unless indeed it

was a French novel, as that would improve them in the language, and was quite in accordance with teaching her daughters cribbage, in order that they might learn to count. What was to become of her children was a question that seldom obtruded itself on the mind of the vain mother, but, when she did think, she supposed that her "darters" could do no less than marry rich tradesmen. But the contrary was the case: wealthy men looked for money, and they who were themselves appearances shrugged their shoulders and remarked that they should like the girls well enough, but what were they fit for? they were too *fine* for a poor man, and too uneducated for a rich one.

Louisa, the eldest, was a mild, sweet-tempered girl, and, too dutiful to oppose her mother's wish, accompanied her sisters to their evening assemblies. She was nineteen when she became acquainted with the only son of a rich ship-chandler, who at last sought the approbation of her father to his union with her.

Mr. Jones had no objection, but there was another question.

"My father," said the young man, "intends to give me £500, and will expect you to give Louisa the same sum."

As Mr. Jones was deeply embarrassed at the time, he, of course, could not comply, and his daughter was left to choose again, or break her heart *for love*. She died in her twenty-second year, and was not long survived by her next sister, who,

after living for awhile the miserable wife of a man old enough to have been her grandfather, sunk into the grave the second victim of her mother's management. When her father's affairs became desperate, the third sought and obtained the situation of lady's maid, to the wife of a rich merchant, with whose profligate son she had become acquainted in the ball-room. Giddy, vain, without a single example to guide her, or one good impression to banish evil ones, she added one more to the list of Mr. Edward's conquests, and, stung with mortification at his subsequent contempt and neglect, she returned to her father's house to survive but a few hours the birth of an infant which, happily for it, found a grave with its forsaken mother.

Abroad on duty, Major Manvers knew little of these occurrences, in a moment of thoughtlessness he had engaged himself to Rosine, and, too much the man of honour to break his word, when she depended on it, he became her husband shortly before the death of Mr. Jones left his widow entirely dependent upon others. Mrs. Manvers might have been happy, but her temper was violent and her disposition avaricious. This was the consequence of her mother's misconduct: rendered miserable at home by the wasteful expenditure of her mother, and the evils consequent upon it, she determined to retain whatever property she had, that she might not be annoyed by the demands of her creditors, as her parents had been by theirs. Disgusted with the meanness, ashamed of the ignorance, of his

wife, Major M. by degrees entirely forsook his home: home indeed, in the endearing sense of the word, it never was to him, for from the first month of his marriage, he had been involved in contentions with his wife. Had Mrs. M. been as attached to her husband as she professed to be, she would have loved him too well to have trifled even for a moment with his peace, and, as being his, *her* children too well to have neglected them as she did. Improper clothing and food, and colds unattended to, until too deeply rooted to be eradicated, terminated the lives of three in their infancy; his favourite Gertrude alone survived, when he was summoned to join his regiment, and fell at its head. Well aware of his wife's wretched disposition, he determined to deprive her of all control over his property, which he bequeathed to his daughter, and appointed a much respected friend his executor.

Mr. Willis did not long survive, to administer his trust, and, dying intestate, Mrs. M. resumed the guardianship of her daughter. Gertrude was too young to be sensible of the loss which she had sustained, but she was unhappy, and not without reason. Mrs. M., ever economical, could not think of retaining the whole of her house; she let the greater part of it furnished, and Gertrude was at all calls ready to wait upon her lodgers. A rich avacious member of Parliament, in the last century, is said to have worn a wig which he found in the street, most likely thrown there by its owner. Mrs. M. did not do so, but she always expected

persons to remunerate her child for her trouble, and their cast off apparel was sometimes manufactured into frocks, &c., for her daughter. No one liked to interfere with her; her surviving brother sometimes did, but was silenced by a reference to his past life—he had been both bankrupt and insolvent, and his sister never failed to reproach him with this, if he attempted to dictate to her.

Gertrude was, one Sunday morning, very busily engaged in cleaning the steps of the door, when a gentleman, who had known her father, observed her, and sent her in. He followed her, and, accustomed at all times to neatness and order, was shocked at the confusion which reigned in the apartments of Mrs. Manvers. Her avarice defeated itself, and she lost much by trying to save; her constant expression was, I am not to be imposed upon by tradesmen; and, in order to obtain the allowance usually made to those who purchase largely, she bought articles wholesale. She seldom dealt with a tradesman more than a month, and, while she was his customer, was very singular in her orders. Her cheesemonger supplied her with eggs by the hundred, and they, together with a side of bacon and firkin of butter, were spoiled before they were eaten. In dry goods her plan answered very well, but it was in vain that she was told that purchasing perishable commodities wholesale, when there were only herself and daughter to consume them, was not economy: she was not to be ridiculed out of her good sense; and, the previous day

having been Saturday, she had been out, and as usual had sent home various articles, for which she could in reality find no use. The table was loaded with provisions suitable for a family of ten or twenty persons, and the floor covered with remnants of gingham, stuffs, &c., old and new, out of which she purposed making her own and her daughter's clothes.

Mr. Dawson was disgusted. Gertrude was pale and thin; and her hands were chapped, owing to their frequent immersions in water; her fine eyes had lost their brilliancy; and the drawling tone in which she spoke, and the impropriety of her speech, convinced him she was utterly neglected. In answer to his questions, she told him that she never went to church, but sometimes, in the evening, to chapel, with a girl whose father was an itinerant green-grocer; and that her mother, having fatigued herself by doing some washing which she had taken in, was then quite delirious. Poor Manvers! mentally ejaculated Mr. D.; then, turning to Gertrude, he said: Do you get your own and your mother's breakfast, and I will return shortly with a physician and a female to attend upon you. A female, humble but trustworthy, was the person whom he selected, and, as Mrs. M. had sent her furniture into the country, he took furnished apartments at Islington, and, giving Miss Manvers into the care of Mrs. Brown, wrote to Mr. Jones, informing him of his sister's state, and requesting he would attend to her concerns. This Mr. Jones refused to do; so, de-

terminated that Gertrude should not be sacrificed, he sent her to school, and called every day at Islington to see her and her mother.

"How old are you, Gertrude?" he once asked.

"I was nine the fourteenth of last July: my father has been dead two years."

"A great alteration has taken place in you for the worse; you read well then."

"O yes, but I never seed a book after."

Mr. Dawson was vexed, he feared she would never lose a certain lowness of manner which she had acquired from associating with the girls whom her mother had allowed to be her companions. Although he sent her regularly to school, her progress was slow, and, when he placed a book before her, she hesitated at the simple word "due."

"I am sure I *do* not know what I must do with you," he said, as she closed the book; and, after a pause, added, "Gertrude, a person of the name of Lumley has been here, do you know him?"

"Yes, and I dont half like him, he pulled the bell*wires down one night, and played all manner of tricks."

"If Mr. Lumley should enquire again for Mrs. M., say he cannot see her," was the order Mr. D. gave to Mrs. Brown, when he left for the day. After four months' constant and unremitting attention, Mrs. M. recovered her health and senses, if indeed she ever was in them. Her language was violent and improper, when her temper was excited, and her threats of doing personal injury rather alarming.

She annoyed Mrs. Brown so much that she dreaded the idea of remaining, and said so to Mr. Dawson. "I am not surprised," he replied, "it is indeed of little use—Mrs. M. is evidently as sane as she ever was." From her conduct it might be doubted whether she ever was, and her behaviour would seem to strengthen the assertion of Dr. Uwins, that all persons are deranged. In some cases, and on some points, they may be, but that all persons are, and at all times, is an assertion too wild to gain credit with any one.

How far they who wilfully destroy reason will have to account for the actions committed during insanity; is a question beyond the power of man to answer; but, if we may draw inferences, we may conclude that, as they knowingly throw away the best gift of God, they will not be guiltless in His sight. It is a kind of moral suicide, and is more disastrous and afflicting in its effects than actual self destruction.

The Mr. Lumley whom Mr. Dawson named was an agreeable young man, but then he had no money, and this made her several times wish to retract her promise, for she had consented to become his wife, nine months after the Major's death.

Mr. L. was the sole surviving child of a fashionable London tradesman, who left him £200 and bad principles for a legacy. Mr. Dawson demanded if Mrs. Manvers intended to become his wife, and she confessed she did. "And how do you mean to act towards your daughter, Madam?"

"I mean to take a house at Hastings, and let it

furnished, and I shall bring Gertrude up usefully. I mean her to take in needlework, and to do the work of the house."

"You will do no such thing, Madam : allow me to remind you that Major M. left his daughter his property, and he did not die worth less than £2000."

"Oh! sir, no such thing," ejaculated Mrs. M.

"I am correct, Madam : his aunt left him £500, and his furniture and plate would now sell for £300 or £400 ; the interest of this money would keep your daughter very respectably."

"But I suppose I am to be provided for, Mr. D.," said Mrs. M. haughtily.

"Not out of this property, Madam : your pension is sufficient to support you : if you choose to marry and lose it, your husband must maintain you : I cannot let your child be wronged." Mrs. M. threatened a law suit, but Mr. D. was firm, and she was glad to compromise with him. On condition that she paid £1500 into his hands for the education and maintenance of her daughter, he agreed to let her retain the furniture during the minority of her child, to whom it was to be surrendered, if she demanded it. The deed to this effect was properly signed and stamped, and Miss M. became the ward of Mr. D. on the day that Mrs. M. married Mr. Lumley.

Mr. Dawson was a gentleman, by birth and manners ; but none can command success, and by severe losses he had been reduced from opulence to a state of comparative poverty and dependence. His scanty salary, of £85 per annum, as a mer-

chant's clerk, was a very insufficient provision, but he was a strictly honourable man, and Gertrude's money was safe in his hands. Before adversity had lowered him in life, and broken his spirits, Mr. D. was a gay man and entertaining companion. Of the friends of his youth and opulence, few now survived, some had perished on the field of battle, some had found a grave in the unfathomed depths of ocean, and others had yielded their breath in the torrid clime of India, or the frozen wastes of Siberia, whither they had been allured by the prospect of mercantile advantage, or by the desire of acquiring scientific knowledge. Some — and they were not a few—had been the butterfly friends of his summer hours; in the autumn of his life they knew him not, and refused him the sanction of their names or the assistance of their influence.

Among the small number whose actions proved them entitled to the name of friends, Mr. Howel Owen, the retired lieutenant of a second rate, was the most worthy and respectable. Mr. H. Owen was one of the very few remaining officers of the navy that were not infected by the prevailing dandyism of the day. He had entered the service at the age of eleven, and had attained the age of thirty-five before he was promoted. He was not remarkable for brilliancy of intellect, but all his brother officers agreed that Owen was a worthy fellow. So thought the ladies, to their credit be it said that few among those who knew Howel Owen felt inclined to refuse him; but he had no predilection for

matrimony, and it was not until he shared £1400 prize money that he thought of a wife. The lady he fixed upon was Miss Emma Ap Howel, a very distant relation, and the proprietress of a few acres of land in North Wales.

Miss Howel was in her thirty-fourth year when she became Mrs. Owen, and, two years after her marriage, she presented him with a daughter. Lieutenant O.'s family increased, and, in his forty-second year, he was the father of five children; four of these attained majority; and the education of the daughters was attended to by their mother, who had passed some years of her life in the family of Lord M—as nursery governess, where she had acquired some useful, and much frivolous, information. Clara Owen was a beautiful girl, and very quick, she soon acquired all that her mother could teach, and was continually teasing her to allow her to go to school.

“Howel,” said Mrs. O. one day, with an air of importance, “I have something to say to you.”

“Well!” was her husband’s laconic answer.

“Your health is very bad, and Wales is too cold for you. I have been in Italy, and the climate will suit you. Farmer Griffiths wants our land, and will pay us a good rent for it, and the children will learn many things there.”

“Yes, Emma, but what use will they be, what use will they be? Italian and fiddle faddles will not keep a roof over their head.”

“I know that, but they can take situations when they are qualified for them.”

Mrs. Owen let not her husband rest until he consented to her plan ; their house was let, their son David sent on board a frigate, and they and their three daughters embarked at Liverpool for Pisa. The Italian tutor of the Misses Owen was Signor Orsini, a young man of noble family, whose father had lost his life and possessions in one of those interminable convulsions which have ever distracted the country. The Signor was asked how he liked his pupils ?

"They are beautiful, Signor, young, and romantic, from the mountains of Snowdon and Penman-mawn."

And they were so. Clara Owen was enraptured with Italy and its inhabitants, but more especially so with her tutor, and it was without any regret that she learned that the Signor Orsini was attached to her. They were married, and remained in Italy some time.

Commercial business had obliged Mr. Dawson to travel, and at Florence he met the Owens. Penetrating and satirical, he soon knew how to estimate them ; he found Mr. Owen the blunt British officer, his wife a half fashionist, and her daughters well educated, intelligent women. He returned to England, and saw nothing of them for some years. Passing through Leicester square, he encountered a lady in deep mourning, whose features were familiar to him. It was the Signora Orsini. She recognized him, and requested he would call on them. "But where?" he said enquiringly. She

told him, Broad street, Bloomsbury ; and when he called, introduced him to her father and sisters. Her husband and mother were dead, and the disturbances of Italy compelled them to quit it, and they were staying in London until the tenancy of the occupant of their property expired.

“That Italian job was a bad one, Dawson,” said Mr. Owen. “I did not willingly consent. Well, what’s done can’t be undone ; but I am £500 the poorer, and I could ill spare it.”

Mr. D. had just become unfortunate ; he shook hands with his friends, and returned to his elegant residence for the last time. St. James’s street lost one of its worthiest occupants when misfortune drove Mr. D. from it. Thirty years had rolled away, when Gertrude Manvers became his ward, and, during that time, he had heard but little of the Owens. The last time he had seen David Owen was when he was preparing to join his ship, and from him he learnt that his relatives were living and well, but that his father, verging on ninety years of age, felt, as might be expected, the infirmities and weaknesses of his years. Since Mr. D. had constituted himself the guardian of Gertrude, he had often thought of the Owens ; he knew that the Signora Orsini and her sisters were fully qualified to instruct Gertrude in the common branches of a fashionable education. And such it was his intention she should acquire. He did not approve of public schools, and he thought the expense of such an one as he should send Miss Manvers to would be

too heavy for her small fortune : while, if the Misses Owen and their sister would receive her, it would be a mutual service. Their small income would be enlarged, and Gertrude would escape satirical remarks on her present vulgarity of speech ; it would too, he thought, be placing her out of the reach of those temptations which commonly assail the young. Alas ! he knew not he was throwing her into them. He wrote to the Signora stating his views, and saying he would pay them £50 per annum, which, in the sequestered place where they lived, would be amply sufficient to cover every expense : the remaining £25 per ann. of Gertrude's money he intended to accumulate during her minority. In her answer, the Signora thanked him for his proposal, and stated that they would willingly avail themselves of it. Mr. Dawson therefore prepared for his journey to Llanrust, the town nearest to his friend's abode : Gertrude gladly prepared to accompany him ; there were no friends she need care to part from, and every thing that was new was pleasant.

As Mr. D. knew not how soon his actions might be questioned, and that in Mrs. Lumley he had a vigilant and malignant adversary, he judged it most proper that Mr. Lumley should accompany him ; and, as his summer journey took him to Denbigh, Llanrust was but little out of his way. Mr. L. readily agreed to go, and they left London in May. Gertrude's young and unformed mind viewed all with wonder, and some of her remarks convinced

Mr. Dawson that her understanding was naturally good.

"What should we do without horses!" said Miss M., as the fine ones of the mail galloped past the carts in which the country people were taking their produce to market.

"What would be the use of horses, Gertrude," said Mr. D., "if we had nothing to feed them with?"

"They would be no use, sir, they would die; but they have hay, God sends it, God is good."

"*He* is good, my dear; *He* sends provender to the cattle, and man to cultivate it for them, rendering each dependent on the other. God is good, Gertrude, but *His* creatures do not think *Him* so, and *His* works are prostituted to the basest of purposes. How often does the horse carry a greater, or, rather I ought to say, a less, brute than himself."

Mr. D. had now gone farther than his ward's mind could follow him, and he was reminded that he was talking to a child, by her loud exclamation of,

"There's a butterfly! I wish I could *ketch* it."

"Well, you will catch plenty in Wales; I will not give you a lecture now, but I told you once before that *ketch* was a vulgar and improper word."

Miss M. turned away her head, and was silent.

To the conversation between his step-daughter and her guardian, Mr. Lumley paid no attention, and he was very glad when they stopped for break-

fast, before which meal he generally drank two glasses of rum. But he knew Mr. D. abhorred the abuse of spirituous liquors, and he deprived himself of his favourite beverage, that he might escape that gentleman's censure. Gertrude ate heartily, and very much wished to learn when they should reach Warwick.

"We shall pass through Warwickshire," said Mr. Lumley, "but shall not be near the city:—why do you ask?"

"I was thinking of Richard Neville, the great Earl of Warwick, and I wanted to see the place."

"If your governesses, Gertrude, speak well of you, and you improve under their care, you shall see Warwick when you return to London."

"When will that be, sir?"

"When you are fourteen; I shall then place you in a large establishment, that you may enjoy the benefit of the classes; and, when you are that age, I hope you will know how to conduct yourself, and will not allow any of your companions to lead you into mischief. Where you are going you will have no misleaders, and it will be your own fault if you err."

"But what frail man observes how oft

He does from virtue fall?

Oh, cleanse me from my secret faults,

Thou God, that knowest them all."

"When did you learn that?" said Mr. D., surprised and pleased at the aptness of the quotation.

"Last Sunday at church, and I thought it was

very pretty. 'My secret faults.' Often when I have been afeard of my mother I have been a going to tell her a lie, but something took her attention, and I didn't; but that was a secret fault, and nobody knew it but God."

Mr. D. made no remark, and Miss M. amused herself by surveying the objects which they passed as minutely as the rapidity of the mail would allow. The beautiful scenery of North Wales enraptured her, and her exclamations of wonder were loud and frequent.

"Now we are at the end of our riding journey," said Mr. D.: "we walk from here to the farm."

Since the return of the family from Italy the house of the Owens had received the appellation of 'The Villa Orsini,' much to the dissatisfaction of the country people, in whose mouths it was the Willat Hosini, and many other singular names. Gertrude was pleased with it, but she was too tired to make observations, and gladly availed herself of Miss Emma's offer of retiring to rest.

CHAPTER II.

Miss M. slept late. When she joined Mr. D., he repeated his advice, shook hands with his friends, and departed, after breakfast, with Mr. Lumley. That day passed in looking round her. The house was built in the old-fashioned style, with casements, and offered many attractions to the romantic; the high mountain of Snowdon, the rich valleys at its base, and the murmuring of the river, with the lowing of the cattle, gave the place a charm which never lost its hold on her mind.

"This week," said the Signora, "you will not be able to attend to any thing but looking about you. There are books, if you feel inclined to read."

Miss M. thanked her, but the first she touched frightened her. It was Cicero's orations, and the name Arthur Leclerc was written on the title page.

"Oh, what shall I do if I have to learn this?" said Gertrude. "I never can do it." Afraid of looking at the others, she went to the window, and amused herself by viewing the fishermen returning with their spoil,

The days passed heavily, and she was glad when Miss E. Owen called her to a small parlour, where they generally sat, and gave her a lesson of spelling. July came, and Gertrude's birth-day, and with it a small parcel from Mr. Dawson, which she was to have on her next natal day, if her proficiency entitled her to it.

"That wont be, I think," said the signora, to her sister, "the child is half stupid." The plan they pursued was calculated to make her so. They had not patience to wait for the gradual development of her mind, but offered too much at once to her notice, until her ideas were confused, and she became incapable of attending to anything. Nor were the manners of the ladies such as would attract the affection of a being who had been held in restraint by fear. Disappointment had soured the tempers of the sisters, and seclusion had rendered them morose.

When Mr. D. thought of the Owens, he forgot that thirty years had worn away, and that the once gay and lovely girls were now staid and elderly women. Never having been used to children, they scarcely knew how to treat them, and they fell into the dangerous error of considering them mere machines. Gertrude was all passion, and her warm affections preyed upon herself, because she could find no object upon which to rest them. She found learning a task, because her lessons were merely heard, not explained; and if she asked a question, her answer generally was, "If you were

to mind your book, you need not ask me." She had a little room to herself, and there she wept away those hours employed by others in active recreation. Books she shunned, for through them she was punished; yet sometimes she looked at the one in which the name of Leclerc was written. The hand was beautiful, and she wondered to whom it belonged, but she did not dare to ask, lest she should be told to mind her own. Continual errors on her part drew severe rebukes from her governess, and Miss M. learnt, with sorrow and in tears, the first principles of music. She could not understand it; and she pored over her notes until her head ached, and bitter tears of mental agony stopped her sight. On these occasions she was dismissed with the words, "Stupid child—no one will ever be able to do any good with you." So past the first summer she spent in Carnarvonshire.

One evening, late in the month of November, Mr. Owen suddenly said, "Do you think we shall see anything of Mr. Leclerc this summer?"

"No," replied Miss O., "I think not."

"I think we shall," observed the Signora, "as we have not heard from him: we will prepare for him, at any rate."

This was all Gertrude heard: who or what the gentleman was she knew not; and she had forgotten the remark, when, on a very fine evening in June, she asked permission to walk round the corn fields.

"You may," said Miss Emma; "but do not go out of sight."

Gertrude was naturally cheerful, and, in the fresh air, she recovered her spirits; she amused herself for an hour, and ran gaily into the parlour, with a bunch of wild flowers which she had gathered. She laid them on a table, and was untying her bonnet, when she perceived a gentleman, who was seated in a recess of the room. Bashful and timid, Miss M. knew not whether to stay or retire: the gentleman observed her confusion, and smilingly said, "Do not let me frighten you." Miss M. stammered:—she had heard and dreamt of angels, and she thought she saw one; the gentleman was young, his person was fine, and his features bore the impress of high intellectual refinement. To Gertrude's ears, the voice of kindness was a stranger, but there was more than kindness,—there was melody,—in the stranger's tones; and Miss M. burst into tears of delightful wonder that such a being should notice her.

Mr. Leclerc was surprized: he rose, and, taking her hand, said, "Are you hurt, or in pain?"

"No, sir," said Gertrude, recovering herself, "but I did not know any one was here, and I was afraid I should be blamed for intruding."

Mr. L. smiled: "You will rather keep me company during the absence of the ladies: are you related to the family?"

"No, sir, my guardian placed me here as a pupil."

Mr. L. bowed, and Miss O., coming in, addressed

Mr. L., by his name, and told Gertrude to retire.

"This is Mr. Leclerc, then," said Gertrude mentally. "I wonder who he is! what a kind man to speak to *me* so freely."

Kindness always makes a deep impression upon those who have experienced its opposite; and persons whose warm affections have been crushed by coldness are much more easily won by affection or good will than those who have been always accustomed to the love and regard of their friends. And so it was with Gertrude; the novelty of any person speaking regardfully to her would have won her attention, but the softness of Mr. L.'s voice reached her heart, and touched a chord that never ceased to vibrate at its sound. Who Mr. L. was she could not imagine, but that he was a person of distinction was evident from the manner in which he was treated by the family.

And in truth, Arthur Leclerc was a person of no common celebrity; his father, a gallant naval officer, fell in the defence of his country, and his youthful widow and infant son were left to mourn his loss. That son was the darling of his mother, who was justly proud of him; her only treasure she could not consent to part with, and a tutor of eminence directed his studies under her careful and superintending eye. Hers was not the fate of some parents, who anxiously try all means to give their children right ideas, and who mourn, with breaking hearts, the perversity and folly of their offspring. If Mrs. Leclerc had a fault to find with her son, it

was that he was too vigilant, and at times injured his health by over application.

"Come, Arthur," she would at times remark, "you have studied enough to-day. I want you now."

"Well mama," said the noble-spirited boy, as he laid by his books, "I am ready; shall I drive you to the forest in your chaise, or would you like an excursion on the river this fine evening?"

"You shall chuse, my love, you never, my child, give me pain; nor will I ever thwart you in any right pursuit, or innocent amusement."

Rowing was one of Arthur's favourite employments, but Mrs. L. had suffered so much by the loss of her husband that it always recalled unpleasant recollections. Arthur knew this; he exclaimed, "I will tell the groom to harness the horses;" and, in thus surrendering his own wishes, he received pleasure from considering that he obliged his beloved mother. How different is this cheerful obedience of the heart from that negligent, unwilling, and sullen, compliance which is exacted from fear and harshness. At eighteen, Arthur was an author, an admired and approved one, in a difficult branch of literature. "An Essay on the Immateriality of the Soul," gained him applause from the most celebrated men of the day; and the adoring mother hourly thanked the bounteous hand of Heaven for bestowing such a treasure. But, ah! with fear she held it; often, too often, was the roseate hue of health displaced by the pallidness of illness in the fine features of her son.

“Arthur, you attend too much to these abstruse disquisitions. Oh! my child, what will be my fate should death snatch you from me, through your too great attention to your studies; how shall I regret having directed you to their pursuit! Arthur, what will your fame avail, if it be purchased with your life?”

“There! dearest mother,” said Mr. L., giving her an unfinished manuscript, “do as you will.”

Mrs. L. gladly locked his desk, and then proposed travelling; he eagerly assented, it was what he had often wished to propose, as it would afford him opportunities of gaining information which he could never otherwise procure.

“What country would you like to visit?” asked his mother.

“I should wish to make myself well acquainted with the beauties and the antiquities of my own country first,” said Mr. L.; “as I think it folly to explore foreign states, while we leave our own unexamined; therefore, my dear mother, if you have no objection, we will go through England.”

“And Wales,” said Mrs. L.; “you have heard me mention a family of the name of Owen, they are very superior people, quite cultivated, for the place they reside in; your father always said that Mr. Owen was an honest man,”

“And what does Pope say?”

“An honest man 's the noblest work of God,”

replied Mr. L.: then he added, “when, my dear mother, am I to go to college?”

"I do not oppose your going, Arthur, because I fear that you will give way to the temptations of an University ; but I fear for your health, when I am no longer by to observe you, I fear for your over assiduity."

Mr. L. blushed, he only wished to leave home, and his mother, that he might steadily and uninterruptedly tread the paths of learning ; but her will was law, for it bound his mind by the never resisted power of love, and he acquiesced in her determination that his health must be stronger before he entered the college walls. Mr. L. had just turned his nineteenth year when he was first introduced to the Owens, and he became a favourite with them all. He wrote Latin and Italian sonnets for the Signora, and instructed her sisters in the newest style of landscape drawing ; he walked with Mr. O. during the day, bore with his feebleness (for shall not I be old, if I live ? he mentally remarked) ; and amused him in the evenings by reading instructive tales and sketches, sometimes his own composition, and sometimes selected from the works of the best authors.

Mrs. L. felt no wish to leave them, her son was too constantly employed to think much, and a great and beneficial change in his health was apparent : they passed six months at the 'Villa Orsini,' and then, at Hilary term, Arthur went to college.

"Is it true, George," said an old and grey-headed tenant, to Mrs. Leclerc's footman, "is it true that our young landlord has gone to college ?"

“ Yes, Roger, he went last week.”

“ God in His mercy send him safe back again, George; it would be a thousand pities such a youth should be corrupted; but they do say those ‘varsities’ are sad places: it would break Madam’s heart for a sartainty, if any ill betide him; God send him safe back, the same good young gentleman as he went.”

“ Amen,” said the footman, and he said it with truth, for he sincerely loved his master.

The Easter vacation sent Mr. L. home, and anxiously did his mother scrutinize his features, to observe if they had undergone any change. To her joy she found only increased beauty, and she saw him depart a second time without any of those fears that had agitated her the first.

Mr. L. proposed spending the long Midsummer vacation in Wales; he possessed a splendid talent for drawing, and wished to take views of the picturesque scenery of Carnarvon, and the adjoining shires. It was at this visit that he left the volume Gertrude saw, and when reminded of it, by a letter from the Signora, he desired her to retain it, as a memorial of him, if she thought it worthy of her acceptance. Mrs. L. was prevailed upon to let him remain at college during his second Easter vacation: but, a friend accidentally saying he was ill, she wrote him the following letter:

“ My Dear Son,

“ It was with inexpressible grief that I learnt from your friend C—— that your health had not been so good as usual: why do you compel me to chide you, Arthur? You exert your-

self too much, and your always delicate health cannot endure the mental fatigue of your situation. Do not, my dear child, lightly risk the greatest of God's blessings; remember how dear you are to your friends, and, for their sake, desist from this over exertion. I feel acutely, and I cannot but beg that, if ever your mother was dear to you, you will be more careful; although so many miles separate us, yet while you live and are well, and it is, as you think, for your benefit, I do not repine: but, Arthur, when you are ill, what earthly comfort have I? My dear child, take exercise; leave your books, and do not pay so much attention to Hebrew and Greek; the languages are, after all that can be said, of little use to an English gentleman, and the constant pronunciation of them gives a peculiar and unpleasant tone to the voice, and, so sweet as yours is, do not let me have it broken to please your tutors. Your going to college is, after all, merely nonsense; for I am perfectly convinced you can learn nothing; and the only good you will do will be to rise above those who are not so profusely gifted by nature as yourself. I at times think that you wish to imitate your illustrious namesake of old, the friend of Bishop Burnet and Lord Shaftesbury; but remember, 'Le Clerc died of his books.'

Know, all the good that individuals find,
 Or God and nature meant to mere mankind,
 Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
 Lie in three words—health, peace, and competence.

Remember these lines. I shall say no more now than that I am, my ever dear child,

Your attached mother,

AUGUSTA LECLERC."

To Arthur Leclerc, Esq.

Mr. L. answered this letter personally, convinced his mother he was not dangerously ill, and returned to the University.

The venerable and excellent Dr. M——, President of his college, was warmly attached to his pupil; he had rejoiced in his brilliant success, and openly avowed that he regretted his departure. "Yet I know you must go, Arthur," said the venerable man, "but, remember, you are quitting one who will always esteem your company a happiness. Go, my dear young friend, go to the world you will adorn and benefit, and may you long, long continue to shew forth Our Master's glory as a worthy Christian gentleman."

Mr. L. pressed the hand of his venerable friend, and threw himself into his carriage; it drove off, and Mrs. L. received her son, with a mind enlarged, and as little tainted with folly as when he left his paternal mansion. He had spent two years and a half at college, and wished to view those places of which he had read so much. Italy,—a country which never loses its attractions, was the spot he wished to visit.

"I do not know anything of it, Arthur," said his mother, "neither will my age allow me to wander now, but with youth it is different. Go to the Owens, they will tell you what you wish to learn, spend the summer there, the air of the mountains is bracing, and in the winter you can go to Rome, if you so wish."

It was in consequence of this arrangement that

Gertrude saw Mr. Leclerc. For the first day or two Gertrude saw little of him; he was completing a work which he had in hand, and confined himself to his apartment until he finished it. When he had, he was constantly with them.

"Is the boat still in existence, Miss Owen?" asked Mr. L.

"Yes, but she requires repairing, sir."

"If you will allow me to have the assistance of your men, I will attend to her, such fine evenings as these tempt me to the water. Is any one inclined for a walk?"

The three sisters were engaged.

"Perhaps this young lady will give me her company," said Mr. L.

Gertrude would willingly have gone, but the Signora forbade her, and Mr. L. departed alone. He did not return till late, and brought with him a file of London newspapers.

"You have never been to Llanrust, surely?" said Mr. Owen, as he laid them on the table.

"Yes, I have; I expected they would be sent, for I gave my steward strict orders to forward them."

"What a blessing it is to be young and active!" said Mr. O. "I was so once."

"Do not repine, sir," said Mr. L., "I shall not be so always: let us see what news we have."

Miss E. Owen snuffed the candles, and Gertrude, who had been wisely kept up to learn an extra lesson, because she could not acquire her first and

easier one, laid down her books, and drew her stool nearer to Mr. L. He read some short articles, when Miss M., who was looking at him, observed him turn pale, he dropped the papers, and exclaimed,

“Merciful God!”

“What is the matter,” exclaimed Miss O., while scarcely able to articulate.

Mr. L. murmured, “Some water.”

“Gertrude flew to the sideboard, and returned with a glassful, and, as he drank it, she observed his tears mingle with it.”

“What has distressed you so?” said Mr. O., “I should not wonder but it is some nonsense or other, some foolish girl married.”

“Oh, no sir,” said Mr. L., “a gentleman whom I knew very well, the Rev. ———, has destroyed himself.”

“Lord! help us and keep us in our senses,” said Mr. O., “that is shocking.”

“It is altogether so sir,” said Mr. L. “I must retire, for the shock has been too much for me. Good night,” he said, bowing to the family; and, turning to Gertrude, he took her hand, “I must thank you for your prompt assistance, you saved me from fainting.”

Miss M. blushed as she replied, “I only did my duty, sir.”

“Never mind whether it was duty or not, I thank you for it.”

She smiled again, but her pleasurable sensa-

tions were very soon banished by the Signora's exclaiming,

"Come, Miss, let me see if you can say your lesson now."

Miss M. could not, and another half column of Johnson's dictionary was her appointed task. She had not half learnt it in the morning, when she was sent to her music: Miss M. was poring over her notes, when Mr. L. came into the room. He was fond of music, and Gertrude's perpetual jarring grated on his ears; he stood over her, and saw that she did not understand it.

"You are wrong," said Mr. L., as she struck G natural instead of A.

Miss M. answered him with her tears, and sobbed as she said, "Oh, I cannot learn."

"Yes, you can," said Mr. L. kindly; "no one ever acquired any thing but by perseverance; and you should not attempt any piece until you know your notes. Can you tell me how many there are?"

"Six," said Gertrude.

"No, seven; you might easily remember that, by considering that they are the first letters of the alphabet, and their place on the instrument is easily ascertained by a little reflection."

Gertrude looked at him, and he pointed to A.

"What is that note?"

She told him.

"A little attention will do," said Mr. Leclerc, passing his hand over the instrument.

Whatever was the reason, Gertrude felt no reluctance to play before him. When she was wrong, he smilingly corrected her, and explained her errors so clearly that she learnt to avoid them in her repetition of the part. When the Signora came in, she was surprized at finding their high-minded guest condescendingly instructing their supposed stupid pupil.

"I am afraid, sir, your meditations have been disagreeably interrupted by her blunders."

"No, madam ; I like harmony, but I like willingness better : I think that, in time, that young lady will play well."

This was the first approval of any thing she did that Miss M. had heard since she left London. The Signora made no reply, but her pupil treasured the remark in her memory.

The morning passed heavily ; Mr. L. was silent and unhappy, and his eyes were scarcely for a moment withdrawn from the papers. After they had dined, Mr. O. reminded him that he had promised to relate some particulars of the unfortunate gentleman whose rash hand had hurried him to the presence of his Maker.

"It has hung upon my mind the whole of the day," said Mr. L. ; "the dreadful occurrence will be severely lamented."

"As being a clergyman, I should imagine so," remarked the Signora ; "where was he educated?"

"At rather a celebrated college of the Oxford University. I cannot say that he held a fellowship

there, but I think I have heard he did. He was very young when he was appointed to a curacy near London, and had the good fortune to please the inhabitants. He was very much liked, he was agreeable in his person, and very lively and affable in his manners. Of his learning I cannot say much ; it was, I believe, rather superficial ; to his governing religious principles I am a stranger, but so far as I have ever heard, his general demeanour and moral conduct were unexceptionable. From — he was removed to a neighbouring parish, where he became acquainted with the lady he afterwards married. She was the daughter of a very rich and influential man, and I fear those considerations biased him too much. Perhaps family disputes may have led to this awful result. In the papers pecuniary difficulties are stated to be the cause of the dreadful act, but I cannot think so ; his income was considerable, and he possessed private property to some amount. But, whatever may have been the cause, the occurrence is a lamentable one. His sacred profession, and the many years he has officiated as a clergyman, give a more painful character to the sad event, and will furnish the enemies of religion with fresh grounds upon which to attack it. The eyes of a malignant world are ever invidiously fixed upon men of his profession ; and if in them the slightest error is remarked and condemned, how will the suicide of one of their body escape animadversion ? It will perhaps be cited as an example to extenuate the

conduct of some other erring being. and, some time hence, we may be told that there can be no sin in self murder, else how dared a clergyman commit it? One of the strongest motives that should restrain us from evil is the influence our conduct may have upon others. We may not only have our own sins to account for, but the iniquities of those whom we have incited to error may be laid to our charge."

"That," said the Signora, "is rather a harsh opinion: if we do not wilfully mislead another, how are we to blame?"

"If mine be a harsh opinion, your's is a self satisfying doctrine," said Mr. L.: "for wilful ignorance there is no excuse. Some years since, I encountered a female, who had always borne a most unexceptionable character. I had heard her spoken of as a most pious, charitable woman. I found her charity—wreckless profusion; and her piety consisted in repeating her prayers, and going to church once or twice a year. One of her replies to me was, 'I do not want to know what that sin is, I beg you will not tell me; if I do not know what it is, I cannot commit it.' I told her it was our duty to inform ourselves, and, so far as human imperfection would allow, to avoid those things which were denounced in the Sacred Writings, and to practice those virtues which are enjoined by Our Saviour and His Apostles. Were we residents in a desert, we might ridicule example, but while we remain in an observant and busy world, we should

pay strict attention to it, and never let our actions contravene the laws by which we profess to regulate them."

The morals of the Signora had not been improved by her Italian connections; her husband was nominally a Catholic, in reality, an infidel. He did not expose himself to the censures of the church, by openly disclaiming her authority; but his life was a continual violation of her precepts. His wife inhibited his latitudinarian sentiments, and never avoided any fault, nor performed any duty, unless she pleased. Their distance from a church, in Wales, prevented their attending one; and, although the Signora obeyed her father, and read prayers every morning and evening, it was entirely a form, and she thought it a needless waste of time, and would have neglected it, if her father would have suffered her. Gertrude was taught the Lord's prayer, the church catechism, and some of Dr. Watts's hymns, and the Signora thought that, with learning them and reading the Bible, she was sufficiently a Christian. Like a man who asserted that he did not drink to excess, because he never at one time drank enough to render him completely stupid, the Signora believed herself an exemplary Christian, because she never altogether neglected her duties. If she treated the simple labourers with undeserved contempt, she satisfied herself by reflecting that a short time before she had spoken condescendingly to them. But she never instructed the ignorant: and when once asked by one of the men, if it was

‘wrong to fish on a Sunday, because he, being a poor man, had no other time to do so, the Signora coldly answered, ‘You must ask the curate, when you go there with the fruit on Saturday; he is paid for teaching, and he will give you any information you may wish to obtain.’ She was never heard to condemn suicide, and she now asked Mr. L. if he considered it courage or cowardice?

“Cowardice, undoubtedly, Madam.”

“I cannot think so, sir; it must be superhuman courage that prompts the brave to ease themselves of life’s intolerable load.”

“Miss T—B——, who destroyed herself at Bath, apparently thought so, too,” replied Mr. Leclerc, “as the lines found written in her pocket book, after apostrophizing death, concluded:—

‘Still may’st thou fly the coward and the slave,
And thy soft slumbers only bless the brave.’

Yet what led her to commit self destruction?”

“I cannot tell, I never heard,” said the Signora.

“It was want of fortitude, Madam: she could not endure the ills which she had brought upon herself. She suffered herself to be ruined at the gaming table, and there lost that property which her brave father thought would protect her when he was at rest in the grave, and which he received as the reward of fighting for his country. She found Goldsmith’s often quoted words true, friendship to her was but a name when her inheritance was poverty; and, at the age of twenty-four, she terminated her existence by hanging. Christianity is so obsolete and so unfashion-

able a thing, that I do not like to speak of it, we will therefore put that on one side, and talk of moral virtues. Citizenship and sociality would have taught Mr. — and Miss B — that they owed a duty to the world, and that true courage consists in bearing ills calmly and patiently, by which we benefit ourselves, while we inspire others by our example. I will not be so absurd as to say that afflictions are pleasant, they are not so at any time; but surely, when they are brought upon us by ourselves, we ought to bear them more patiently; yet instead of that we fly in the face of Heaven, and accuse God of injustice. I could relate a thousand instances to prove that self murder is cowardice; but I think one tale, and the melancholy case before us, will be quite sufficient. If the Rev. Mr. — was embarrassed, it could not be courage which made him fly from his difficulties, for courage would have taught him to meet and to surmount them."

"I speak of suicide in reference to another world," said the Signora.

"In reference to another world, Madam, it is presumption: but man in his present state is a finite being, and his ideas seldom wander beyond this state of existence; it is all he understands, he comprehends nothing after it, and he is sensible only of its pains and pleasures. He eagerly grasps at whatever appears likely to lessen the one, or heighten the other. Death is preferable to ignominy, or to want; and, despising man, and defying God, he

anticipates his will, and hurries himself into His presence uncalled, and covered with guilt."

"I have read the Bible attentively," said the Signora, "and cannot discover any denunciations against suicide."

"I should conceive it forbidden by the sixth commandment, 'Thou shalt do no murder,' and by many other texts of Scripture, such as 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' We cannot fear God if we break any of his laws; and we are particularly exhorted to have patience, and to 'hope always,' which we cannot do if we put ourselves out of that state of being in which we are to exercise 'faith, hope, and charity.' It is directly contrary to every page of the Sacred writings. You, Madam, are the first person, I believe, that ever advocated the sinlessness of suicide."

"Clara says many absurd things," said Mr. Owen, "I am often shocked at her."

Mr. L. knew the Signora's disposition, argument frequently fixes persons more firmly in their own opinions, and she was obstinate to a degree: he therefore said, "If you feel inclined to hear a long and dull tale, I will read one. I think I have all the pieces with me."

"Do not commence till after tea," said the Signora. "Gertrude, child, let me hear your lesson."

Miss M. knew little of it, the Signora frowned.

"Grammar and the dictionary should be learnt together," said Mr. L.: "if your pupil knew grammar she would know what part of speech 'a cake' is."

"Oh ! she is so stupid," said the lady.

"No, no," said Mr. L., "a little patience is all that is required, she played pretty well this morning."

The Signora elevated her eyebrows.

"How can you think so !"

"Nay it speaks for itself : now let her play the piece over again."

Gertrude did so, the Signora admitted that it was very fair, and Miss M., encouraged by the acknowledged fact that she was improved, paid a great deal of attention to her lessons, and repeated them better than she had ever before done.

"Now for your tale," said Mr. O., when the tea things were removed. Gertrude lingered, she wished to hear it, but the command of her governess was imperative, and she went to her own room to learn Italian lessons, ridiculously enough given to a child who could not speak her own language with propriety. The Signora and her sisters took their work, Mr. O. his cigar, and Mr. L. commenced reading

THE PUNISHMENT.

CHARLES Weston was brought up at the Foundling Hospital, he knew neither father nor mother, nor had he an idea who they were : at twelve years of age, he was apprenticed to the captain of the Margaret, a Greenland ship, and the first he saw or knew of life was in his voyage there. Capt. Hamilton was the son of a Scotch clergyman, and a man very superior to his station ; the crew were such as they generally are. Charles paid attention, he became

a skillful helmsman, and was much gratified with the praises which he received. Sometimes he complained, one thing was tiresome, this was so much trouble.

“Trouble, lad,” said the Captain, who overheard him, “there is nothing done without it. There is trouble when we are born, and so it is from the cradle to the grave. There is trouble with money, there is trouble without it, we have trouble all through life. And that is why I do not like you to read those romances you are so fond of. They are all fairy tales, the very sorrows are fictitious; and the way in which the heroes and heroines support them resembles Cato and the other heathens that defied the Power they could not overthrow, rather than Christian and reasonable men. Why do you not read your Bible, lad? we do not know but that the next day may be our last, and I suppose you would not like to die with lies in your head and hand. If you will read them, bear in mind that they are all made-up stories, and remember that you must not expect to see their scenes realized in actual life. Do not expect to be a lord because you do not know who your parents were; they were as likely to be beggars as any thing else. And do not you think that fortune will come to you without looking after it; recollect, too, that, if you wish to do good, you must keep yourself sober; drunkenness is ruin all ways.”

Charles promised, and, when he was nineteen, Captain Hamilton made him second mate, as the

reward of his good conduct. Mr. Weston studied to please, and frequently accompanied Capt. Hamilton to the houses of different friends; among others they visited Mr. Emanuel. He was an extensive merchant, and the only heir to his great wealth was his daughter Clara, one of those gay, attractive beauties that captivate at a glance. Miss E. was fond of admiration, she received a great deal, but did not disdain Mr. W's; he indeed admired her, and the more so, because, although beautiful, she was not proud, and conversed as freely with him as with the richest guest at her father's table. Mr. E. had an elegant residence at Layton, and one of Clara's favourite employments was examining the beautiful monuments which adorn the churchyard.

"I have often said I would go to church," said Clara, when Mr. W. one evening accompanied her to inspect a monument, on which some Latin verses were traced,

"Why, do you not go to church?" asked Mr. W., with surprize.

"Oh! no, I am a Catholic."

Mr. W. started.

"If Capt. Hamilton knew that—he would try to convert me," said Miss E.: "he has done so for a long long time, but it will not do; no Presbyterianism for me," and Miss E. drew herself up with some contempt.

"I am afraid you possess the intolerant spirit of your church, Miss E., and that you despise those who differ from you," observed Mr. W.

"No; but I attempt not to convert, nor will I be intruded upon; but drop that subject. I delight to hear of foreign climes, and you can satisfy my curiosity. You spoke of a monkey, which you caught in America."

"It was a singular animal, some of its tricks were amusing, but some were vexatious. I had been shaving myself, and, being called off, left the box and razors on the table; the thing had been watching me, and the moment I left the state room, he lathered his face, and put himself before the glass. Seeing another monkey, he chattered most amusingly; and at last got behind the glass. Not finding his resemblance, he threw it down, and I gave him a thrashing for his pains."

"What became of Mr. Monkey?" said Clara.

"He was his own executioner, Miss: some gunpowder was brought upon deck to dry, and the foolish animal threw some lighted wood into it, and the powder exploded, and blew him all to atoms."

"Poor thing," said Miss E., "how I should have grieved!"

"I was sorry, Miss E., for he had often amused me, and I missed him."

Miss E. was silent: she would have sorrowed for the sufferings of the animal; not for her own loss of its services; it was a trait of selfishness in Mr. W. which she did not like, and it was some-time before she forgot it. But she did cease to recollect it, and Mr. W. was re-instated in her esteem. Mr. W. progressed in the favour of Mr.

Emanuel, who offered him the command of the Clara, a fine ship of four hundred tons.

"I am greatly obliged to you, sir, for your kind offer, but I cannot leave Capt. Hamilton, he has been so extremely kind to me that I feel it my duty to remain with him."

Mr. E. did not understand gratitude, he had none in his nature, but Mr. W. could not easily offend him; and he offered him the ship when Capt. Hamilton retired from the merchant service to enjoy his hard-earned gains in his humble but peaceful dwelling.

Mr. W. then thankfully accepted the offer, and was master of the Clara; he was eminently successful; his judgment in nautical matters was allowed to be unrivalled; and in intricate questions of seamanship, he was always referred to. Praise rendered him vain, and success so elevated him that he could not brook disappointment. "Avast there, Phil," said a sailor, "here comes the captain, and we shall have a pretty breeze if these things is in the way."

The man was right: Capt. W. cursed their carelessness, and threatened to have them ropes-ended. On board his ship he was a perfect tyrant, and woe to the being that presumed to contradict him. Inflexible, proud, and severe, he was no favourite with any of his officers or men; his commands were obeyed in silence, and the moment he withdrew, his subordinates did not hesitate to express their opinion of his conduct.

"Such pride," exclaimed Linley, his first mate;

“when I knew him some years ago, he was a different creature; but it seems that prosperity does make a man forget himself. For a mere stripling, a youth of five-and-twenty, to give such authoritative orders, and enforce them so haughtily, is too bad.”

“Especially when his birth is considered,” observed the Steward, he was brought up at the Foundling.”

Had not Mr. W. forgotten his station, he might not have been reminded of this; but such remarks were often made, and one lady, a beautiful, but spoilt, child of tender parents, shrugged her shoulders, and exclaimed,

“Oh! he was brought up at the Foundling,” as Clara Emanuel mentioned him to her. Time stole on, and the beautiful child of the rich merchant remained unmarried. She was often sought, but, at times, she seemed weary of flattery.

“Mr. Laurance,” said the footman, throwing open the door.

“I will not see that fool, Charles,” cried Miss E., throwing down a book. “Send him away, and join me in the library.”

Miss E. had scarcely left the room, when Mr. Laurance entered, and, after talking with him a few minutes, Mr. W. complimented him away.

“You are so celebrated a judge of prize fighting, Mr. Laurance, that I wonder you have not attended the fight on Blackheath,” said Mr. W., ironically.

“Why, I have a good mind to go, but I wanted to see that divine creature.”

"Miss E.? She is engaged, sir ; by all means give the amateurs of the Ring the benefit of your advice on this occasion ;" and as Mr. W. opened the door, Mr. L. could do no less than walk out.

"Well, have you sent him off?" asked Clara

"Yes ; he is gone to enjoy the spectacle of two men maltreating each other, for a few paltry pounds, and for the gratification of the civilized and humane British public."

Mr. W. was so fortunate, and so much admired, that he thought he might reckon on the father's partiality to approve the daughter's choice, and avowed his affection for Miss E. to her father. Mr. E. listened with a pallid cheek and glazed eye.

"Does Clara love you?" he asked, in a tremulous tone.

"She referred me to you, sir ; and told me if I could gain your consent, her's should not be wanting."

"I wonder at her condescension, and at your presumption, sir ; begone, sir. Do you suppose that I will allow my daughter to be your wife, the wife of my servant ? You are mad ; if you wish to retain your situation, let me hear no more of this."

Mr. W. hastily took his hat, and hurried to Gracechurch street : Camberwell ! he exclaimed as he mounted the roof of a coach ; the driver nodded assent, and he was soon set down at the peaceful abode of his first friend. ●

“I have not had the honour of a visit from Capt. W. for some time,” said Mr. Hamilton drily, as he pointed to a chair. .

“I have been much engaged, sir; but I cannot apologize now;” and Mr. W. related his conversation with Mr. E. : he spoke haughtily, and with bitterness, as he said, “In spite of his taunts that I am his servant, I feel myself his equal; I am doing very well, and should do better as his relative. He did not presume to mention birth; there, at least I am his equal, for I have heard that he is the son of a Portuguese Jew, and a Frenchman’s mistress. My parentage could not possibly be worse than his own.”

“Drop this nonsense, Charles; Clara E. is no wife for you.”

“I will marry her, if all the fathers in Christendom forbid it,” and Mr. W. confirmed his assertion with an oath.

“You will not marry her, Charles; she is the only woman you dare not marry.”

“That must be proved, Capt. Hamilton; I dare not marry her? Who or what will prevent me?”

“Relationship.”

“How, sir?”

“I never bind myself by any promise, Charles; if in this instance I had, I must have broken it. I did not wish to have any intercourse with Mr. Emanuel, but he forced himself upon my notice, and I pitied you.”

“What is all this preface for? What have I to

learn?" exclaimed Mr. W., with great vehemence.

"Simply this. You are his own child."

"Go on, Capt. Hamilton; go on, how am I his son?"

"You were truly informed respecting his birth: When I first knew him, he was an agent of a great mercantile house, and was doing very well on his own account. He was married, and his wife was a very respectable female, he could charge her with no fault; and I must do him justice, he did not accuse her of any. But he repined at his fate, he coveted children. He was going to Spain on business, and as Mrs. E. was not very well, she was to go with him. She took as a servant, an orphan, the niece of her aunt's husband, consequently no relation to her: but Mrs. E. felt for her destitute situation, and engaged her for a permanency. She paid dearly for her kindness; Sarah Weston was your mother, and Mr. E. openly acknowledged you as his child, when you were born. Mrs. Emanuel suffered greatly; her feelings were still more tried when, six months after your birth, she herself became the mother of Clara. She was then residing with her father, who immediately wrote to Mr. E. and informed him of Clara's existence. You and your mother were then secondary objects; he sought his wife, she yielded to his entreaties, and once more returned to his abode. Mr. E. came to me, and asked what he should do with you? he went farther, he ventured to insult me, by offering me £2000 if I would marry your mother. I answered

him as he deserved, and for some years I saw nothing of him. When he did seek me, it was to request that I would take you as an apprentice, as he wished to do what he could for you, and knew that with me you would fare well. I can assure you, Charles, that it was not on his account that I took you; I have never been accustomed to incur obligations, and to such a man as Mr. E. I could never have owed one. There are some to whom it is a pleasure to confess ourselves indebted, there are others whose favours ought to be ever reprobated; of the latter were Mr. E.'s. I could have begged my bread, blessing the hand that gave it, rather than have received a fortune from him."

Capt. W. roused himself from his lethargy, and said: "I have often wondered at the coolness of your manner towards him, and it has puzzled me why you went to his house, if you so much disliked him."

"I should never have gone, but for you; I found you a clever lad, and I thought your father was in duty obliged to provide for you, and the more so as he had placed a stigma on your birth."

"He cannot feel," said Capt. W. bitterly. "What became of my mother?"

"He informed me she died when you were three years old, and earnestly entreated him to provide for you; you now know why he has done so, and will see that you must resign Clara."

"So I suppose," said Mr. W. calmly; "but Mr. E. will hear more from me:"—he rose.

"Will you not stay, Charles?" said the kind-hearted Capt. Hamilton, who forgave the forgetfulness of his young friend, on account of the sad disappointment he had experienced.

"No, sir; I am not fit to converse now; I am too much overcome. I will see Mr. E. to-night."

"You will not go to Layton to-night, surely?" said Capt. Hamilton.

"Oh no; Mr. E. has taken a house in Picadilly for a few months, and he is there."

"Well; when you can remember there is such a place as Camberwell, I shall be glad to see you."

Mr. W. merely said Good evening, as the servant let him out. Mr. W. thought that Mr. E. might be at his counting-house, where he had left him, and where he sometimes remained to peruse his foreign correspondence. He was there, and, without any preface, Capt W. related the tale he had heard, and sternly demanded if it was true. Mr. E. acknowledged that it was. Mr. W. paced the apartment for a long time, without speaking; his lips quivered, and his tongue refused to utter the reproaches which his heart prompted. At length he took his hat, and opened the door.

"Where are you going, Charles?" demanded Mr. E.

"To the ship," he replied, as he flung to the door. He walked rapidly to the custom-house stairs, where he took a boat. The Clara was lying

on a shipwright's ways at Limehouse, where the waterman put him on board: the mate received him, and gave him some letters; he looked at them, and carelessly said,—

“Where are my pistols, James?” for Capt. W. had become too great a man to address his inferiors by any other than their christian names.

Mr. Linley was a respectable man, and he coolly replied, “They are below, sir; in their usual place.”

Capt. W. went down, and the steward followed him, to receive his orders as to what refreshment he chose to take.

“Not anything; you may go.”

The man obeyed, and Mr. W. sought his pistols; the flints were bad, and would not strike; he put fresh, wound up his watch, and sat down to write. His letter to Mr. E. was bitterly reproachful, to Capt. Hamilton friendly; he tried to address Miss E., but it was long before he did: he then wrote a few lines, expressing his deep attachment to her, and his determination not to live if deprived of her. Though had he told the truth he would have said that he could not endure to be regarded by those who knew him as a rejected suitor. He certainly did love her, but it would not have been disappointment in his affections which would have led him to commit suicide. He sealed his letters, and then, loading his pistols, he held one to each temple, and fired. It was nothing unusual for him to discharge them, and therefore the report did not surprise

the men. Eleven was the hour he generally supped, and one of the boys knocked, to be admitted to lay the cloth. Not receiving any answer, he alarmed the mates, who burst open the door; the force of the concussion had put the candles out, but the fire was burning brightly, and by its light they discovered what had taken place. He was quite dead, his head was dreadfully shattered, and one of his eyes was forced from its socket.

"This is horrible," exclaimed Mr. Linley, as he viewed the disfigured corpse of his lately imperious commander.

"Yes, and the ship on the point of sailing, too," remarked the second mate; "what must we do? I must go to Mr. E.;" and the mate did so.

Mr. E. listened with horror; for the first time in his life he felt that he could not disguise his emotion. And his daughter—but he could not think of her, and he remained with his face buried in his hands.

"What's to be done, sir?" said Mr. Linley; "the ship should sail on Thursday."

"You must take the command—go to Capt. Hamilton—tell him he must give directions, for I cannot."

"It is half past twelve, sir; how can I go to Camberwell to night?"

Mr. E. had been called from a brilliant assembly; his daughter was there, entertaining her friends, and the words she said when her father left the room were, 'I wish Charles Weston had been here this

evening ; he would have told you an amusing story of Indian gallantry.' These words rung in her father's ears as he listened to the mate, and remembered that he of whom she spoke was now a breathless and mutilated corpse. He rang furiously : and, when the liveried domestic answered his summons, he exclaimed,

" Tell Christopher to put to the horses, and drive this person to Capt. Hamilton's at Camberwell. Be quick."

He was obeyed, and Capt. Hamilton disturbed at midnight by the loud knocking of Mr. E.'s coachman.

" What, what do you say ? " exclaimed Capt. H., " Charles shot himself ! Oh, it is quite impossible ! "

" It is true, sir, and Mr. E. begs you will go with me to the ship. "

Capt. Hamilton was inexpressibly grieved ; in spite of all his errors, he was attached to Mr. Weston, and he had ever thought of suicide with the greatest horror. Early as it was, he went with the mate, and was summoned on the inquest to give his opinion of the deceased's state of mind. Capt. Hamilton could not trifle with the solemn obligation of an oath, and from his evidence, and that of the other witnesses, the jury felt themselves bound to return a verdict of *Felo de se*.

Mr. Emanuel heard this with horror ; his self-reproaches were harrowing ; and, if any thing could have increased his misery, it was the mental affliction of his daughter. She was long in a state of

unconsciousness; and when she did revive she declared to Capt. Hamilton her intention of taking the veil, either in Italy or Spain.

"Clara," said the captain, "you are wrong. See, in what has occurred, the punishment of your father's criminality, and learn, yourself, to do right. I do not wish to wound your feelings, or to offend your prejudices, but I must say that I trace many of your father's errors to his religion. A Catholic, and believing what the priests of that religion teach, that they have power to forgive sins, he scrupled not to commit heinous ones, and purchased their forgiveness by his wealth."

The words 'ill gotten' trembled on his lips, but respect for the daughter's feelings prevented his uttering them.

"Respecting auricular confession and absolution, our clergy have Scripture for their warranty."

"Not so," Clara. Our Lord gave the power to absolve from sin to his apostles, and to them only. This I think is indisputably proved by their raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, and performing many other miracles, which none after *them* ever could do."

"And you infer from that, sir, that the 'Vicar of Jesus Christ' has no power to commission men to absolve from sin?"

"I do, Clara."

"Why then are the clergy of the church of England ordained with the words 'Whosoever sins thou remittest, they are remitted; and whosoever

'sins thou retainest they are retained,* if they do not believe they can do so?'

"This is one of the few errors which escaped the notice of the Reformers," said Capt Hamilton.

"I do not think that any of our clergy really agree to the doctrine."

"And they look upon the whole service as a mere form, I suppose," said Miss E. sarcastically.

"I do not think so, Miss E."

"Then why do they not alter it? but I ask foolishly, are not many of the clergy Atheists?"

"I am glad† to say they are. You look surprised, Clara: but to what but infidelity can we ascribe the profligate lives of too many clergymen of all denominations? Credit me, Clara, every vicious clergyman is a secret Atheist, he cannot avow himself to be one, because if he did he must quit his profession, and resign his means of subsistence: so,

* It is some years since I read the ordination service, and I cannot say that the quotation is correct; but such is the sense of the words still used by the Bishops and other dignitaries of our church.

† A gentleman who perused the *MS.* wrote *sorry*, over the word glad, evidently thinking I had made a mistake. My meaning was that, as there are many clergymen whose lives prove them infidels, it was fair to conclude that their theory was atheistical, which was a subject rather of gladness than sorrow to the Christian, so far as his religion was an object to him. They were infidels in practice, atheists in theory, and, as not believing, it could not be said to bring "the religion of Christ into contempt."—The tale itself is, with a slight variation, is strictly true.

not believing the doctrines he teaches, he evades them in his practice, and while he confesses his God with his lips, in his heart, and before men by his works, he denies Him. And this resolves the seeming paradox, that a Holy Faith should be contradicted in the lives of its teachers. But it was not of this I meant to speak : God is the only Judge of the heart, and to Him we ought to leave the scrutiny of the motives and actions of men. I wish to show you, from the late sad event, that the Almighty will not always be mocked ; and that, sooner or later, sin is its own punisher. Your mother's money laid the foundation of your father's wealth, and her respectability of connection introduced him to scenes he could never otherwise have entered. He had added to his fortune by injustice, and he murmured because he had no child to inherit it : the unfortunate mother of poor Charles was young, destitute, and, in some degree, claimed a friendly kindness from him. She was his wife's servant, and that wife was not at one time likely to survive the voyage ; when she did recover, it was to find her servant her husband's mistress, and known as such by the officers and crew. My dear young friend, dearly has your father paid the penalty for sin, in witnessing the destruction of the child so much coveted. He destroyed one who, but for him, might have been useful in her station, and he planted a thorn in your mother's heart. Her situation was a trying one for a delicately-minded female, and that she was ; either she must reside with

"a man she despised, or you must be brought up an alien to your father. She did not long survive, but, with her last breath, she entreated him to take care of you : in worldly matters he has done so, but Clara, you have an immortal soul ; how has he taught you to preserve that from the stain of sin ? Go to no convent, Clara, its seclusion is at best but indolence : you have had an awful warning ; let it guide you. Devote your coming years to a life of active usefulness, so will you best serve your Creator ; and try, my child, to convince your father that that offence could not be light which has occasioned so much misery."

Clara promised, but life was not lent her to perform : and, at six-and-twenty, she ceased to exist. Capt. Hamilton drew from this another lesson—that the faults of the parents do fall upon the children, but naturally, not by any especial command of God. Had not Mr. Emanuel broken His laws, Charles Weston would not have been born, and Clara would not have sunk into the grave, the victim of deep anguish and fruitless regret.

"I have seen many vicissitudes," mentally remarked Capt. Hamilton, "but let me be thankful. I have a competency, and health to enjoy it. I have been preserved from gross sins, and I know that, if I truly repent of those I have committed, they will be pardoned, and blotted out for the sake of my Redeemer. Here then, in my peaceful cottage, let me dedicate my coming years to His service, and when I am called to leave the world, may I do so joyfully !"

Mr. Emanuel survived his daughter but five months, and his wealth, ill acquired, and much mis-used, was doomed, after his death, to perpetuate error. He bequeathed it to members of the Church of Rome, to be applied in saying masses for the repose of his soul, and those of his children, and for the erection of a convent in his native country, at the altar of which the living victims of supersition were to be immolated.

If you would know peace, shun error; however pleasant may seem the paths of vice, their traveller will find that they lead to an awful precipice; which he cannot avoid, and from which he too often cannot retrace his steps.

"You would teach us a good many lessons, in that short tale of yours, Arthur," said Mr. Owen: "in those few pages you have attacked many vices."

"I have not sir," said Mr. Leclerc, "the manuscript was sent to me by a friend."

"I thought it was not your own composition," said the Signora, "it wants the elegance that characterizes your writings."

"You are frequently pleased to flatter me, Madam, but allow me to remind you that little merit is due to me for any acquisitions I may have made. I must have been a dull scholar not to have profited by what I was taught."

"These things are gifts," said Miss Emma, "all the teaching in the world often does little good."

"Of what have we to be proud?" said Mr. L.,

"all is gift. Are we thankful for it? But what do you think of the tale?"

"It is very well, but I think the writer wrong in attacking the clergy," said Mr. Owen. "People are so very ready to find fault with them, without considering that they are human as well as themselves."

"Certainly they are; and who have greater temptations than young clergymen? if they do right, they are told, It is your duty; and if they err, every one is ready to execrate their conduct."

"But it cannot be denied that there have been, and that there are, profligate, horribly profligate, characters among them: and of such I fancy the writer meant to speak."

"Perhaps, Madam, you will favour me with your opinion. What induced Capt. Weston to destroy himself?"

"Disappointment," said the Signora. "I believe you were right when you said suicide was cowardice."

"And presumptuous, heinous crime," said Mr. L.: "and may we ever be preserved from ill and from ourselves, for we are our own worst enemies!"

CHAPTER III.

GERTRUDE said her lessons to the satisfaction of Miss Emma, and was seated at her work ; while Mr. Leclerc, with his valet, and one of the labourers, had gone to Llanrust, for some articles with which to repair the boat mentioned. It was soon finished, and Miss M. was delighted when the Signora said she might accompany them when they went on the river. Not one of the sisters was blind to the marked change which had taken place in Gertrude, although they were all ignorant of the cause. Miss M. found there were some persons in the world who were neither morose nor unfeeling, yet they were learned ; Mr. Leclerc was infinitely superior to any one she knew, and what made him so ?

“ It is his knowledge,” said Miss M. : “ then ; if he acquired all this, why should not I ? it cannot be so very hard, or no one could know these things. I will try to master these difficulties, then I could converse with such people as Mr. L. ; and if I am improved, I am to have my guardian’s present, whatever it is ; and, my patience ! I shall be eleven in

July, and there are but eighteen days for me to hope to win it."

But those eighteen days she employed well, she had not her books returned, nor did she receive any reproof for stupidity or neglect.

"This is your birth-day, Gertrude," said Miss Emma, when the fourteenth of July arrived: "if you had improved I should consider you entitled to Mr. Dawson's present."

"I think she has improved," observed Miss Owen.

"Oh! yes," said Mr. Leclerc, "I can see a change: and you are aware, my dear Miss Emma, that reward sweetens labour; if you encourage her now, you stimulate her to future attempts and to perseverance until she acquires anything that may appear difficult."

"Very well; go to my room, Gertrude, and bring my work-box."

Miss M. did so, and the Signora took from it a gold watch, chain and key.

"It is rather an improper present, I think," said Miss Emma; "ornament increases vanity."

"In my opinion a watch is a very proper gift," said Mr. L; "it requires winding to keep it in order, and every time we do so we should remember that so many hours of life are fled, and that it will be well for us if we employ those which are coming (if we live to see them) better than we have done those which are gone."

"You draw morals from everything, be it ever so simple," said the Signora.

"Is the flight of time a simple subject?" asked Mr. Leclerc.

"No, certainly!" exclaimed Mr. Owen pettishly: "you talk like a fool, Clara; give the girl her watch; and, do you hear? child, remember what Mr. L. has said; that every hour the hand of that passes brings you nearer to the grave."

"And a very good thing too," muttered Gertrude, "for I am sure I have enough to make me tired of my life; I wish I had a brother, or such a relation as Mr. Leclerc."

No one understood what she said: the Signora shewed her how to wind it up, and threw the chain over her neck.

"I expect you will learn rapidly," she said; "you will now have no occasion to look at the clock to ascertain what hour it is."

In the month of August, Mr. L. received a letter from a nobleman resident in Glamorganshire, earnestly requesting him to spend a few weeks with him:—

"I know I am asking a very great favour, Leclerc, and perhaps you will wonder at my presumption; at any rate, you may say, 'What can you offer me to induce me to waste my time with you?' I know you are something of an antiquary, so I say, come and view Cherpilly castle; you will be obliged to confess that its ruins are beautiful, and as you are going to Italy, when you come back, you will be able to tell me whether it really does resemble the round tower at Pisa. Some judges

say that it does ; I am too old to go and see, but as you are going, perhaps you will oblige me by a flying visit now, and a short account of what you have seen, when you return."

"This is neither more nor less than wholesale flattery, my lord," said Mr. Leclerc mentally, "and I feel half inclined to refuse ; you do not know much of me, nor have you certainty that I deserve the compliments you lavish upon me. Flattery and friendship are different, very different, things."

Mr. Leclerc bade adieu to the Owens in the month of September ; Gertrude felt very miserable when she heard he was going, but was gratified by hearing him say to the Signora, "I will visit the places you named, and come and tell you how they look after an interval of thirty-two years. He shook hands with them all, smiled at Gertrude, and vaulted on his horse, which he had had sent from London. Cherpilly castle, not Lord L—— drew him to Glamorganshire. Mr. Leclerc was not accustomed to journey in silence ; his groom was a decent young man, and Mr. Leclerc occasionally exchanged words with him.

"There is a beautiful prospect, sir," said the man, as he pointed to a turn of the road.

"You are right, Grange ; surely this is fairy ground : Mr. L. reined in his horse, and viewed it leisurely. A small house of freestone was placed on the summit of a gentle declivity, and which could scarcely be called a hill : on the east and north sides were some beautiful groves of trees,

from the fir to the lofty oak, which gave the place the appearance of a hanging wood. The yellow corn waved at a distance behind the house, and before it were vases containing every species of plant in flower. Some white steps were let into the bank, which rose upon each side, and, on the grass, at the top, sat a young and aerial looking creature. Her dress was white, her hat had been apparently thrown off capriciously, as it lay beside her on the ground, and was covered by a large black lace shawl; her fine light hair had been danced out of form, and was thrown carelessly back over her neck; one of her hands rested on the ground, the other arm was thrown round the waist of a kneeling boy, to whom she was earnestly talking. Mr. L. put his finger on his mouth, and walked his horse to the foot of the hill. There he could hear her voice, and that was as faultless as her person.

"Augustus, how perverse you are!" she said, in a tone which seemed to say, 'I would be very angry if I could,' "what will my grandfather say?"

"What should he say, Laura?"

"He will be angry, very angry, with me, and say that it is my fault that you have not learnt your lesson. There, take your book," and she drew one from beneath her hat, and gave to it him.

"Well, sister," and the boy spoke with dignity, "you should not have taken it from me."

"You should have learnt it. Oh, Augustus, I would be ashamed"——

Mr. L.'s horse was rather an impatient one ; he neighed loudly, and the young lady started from her recumbent posture. Her cheek was dyed with blushes when she perceived a stranger, but she quickly re-collected herself, and stepped forward.

"Do you wish to be informed how far you are from a town, sir?"

"No," replied Mr. L. ; "but may I ask who is the inhabitant of this sweet place?"

"My grandfather, sir, the Rev. David Morgan."

"Can I have the pleasure of seeing him?"

"Certainly, sir. Augustus, tell your grandfather he is wanted."

"Where can she have been educated?" mentally enquired Mr. L. ; "where can so young a girl have acquired such grace? She is certainly not fourteen."

While Mr. L. was musing, Mr. Morgan addressed him, and the young author was again surprized. Eighty years had the venerable man lived and served his God : and he seemed to have his reward on earth. He was tall, and not in the least bent by age ; his white hairs fell over an unfurrowed brow ; and the glow of health flushed his cheek, and gave brilliancy to his eye. His voice was firm, and his enunciation plain and distinct.

"We shall be happy sir, to afford you the hospitality of our country, and to give you any information you may require."

Mr. Leclerc was a critic, and a skilful one, too ; Mr. Morgan spoke pleasantly, but not with real

cordiality, and Mr. L. felt inclined to quit abruptly; but it was not his disposition; and, in stopping to speak to Mr. Morgan, he leaned against the fence which separated the grounds from the open country. The pressure forced from his waistcoat-pocket a small volume which had been a birth-day present from his mother, on the cover of which was inscribed, 'To Arthur Leclerc, Esq., from his affectionate mother, A. L.' The book fell on a hedge of briar, which grew next the fence. Mr. Morgan offered it him, and in doing so saw the inscription. His manner changed at once.

"Have I the honour of addressing Mr. Leclerc?"

"If it be an honour, you certainly have," replied Mr. L., smiling.

"Then I must intreat you will favour me with your company. Lord L—'s seat is many miles distant."

For himself, Mr. L. would not have accepted the invitation; but the horses wanted rest after two days' travelling, and he dismounted. The interior of the house agreed with its exterior; a lightness and elegance were every where perceptible, which little agreed with the reported poverty of country curates. Some very good engravings adorned the walls, and an elegant harp was placed before an open window, which commanded a fine view of hill and vale, agreeably diversified by some clear lakes, on which geese and ducks of various colours were softly gliding.

"You have a perfect paradise here, sir," said Mr. L.

Mr. Morgan answered affirmatively, and requested his granddaughter to deliver a message to his servant. Laura obeyed, but did not return; and Mr. L. scarcely thought of her while conversing with Mr. M.

"Is not —— one of your works, Mr. L.?" asked the Rev. gentleman.

"It is, sir."

"I was much gratified in perusing it. You are a young author."

"Perhaps, sir, you think too young an one."

"No, but you cannot know much from experience. You may speak of villany, but have you suffered from it?"

"That is a singular question, sir, and I feel I ought to be thankful that I am enabled to return a negative answer. Although I have witnessed much of moral turpitude, I have not been affected by it otherwise than regretting, with every feeling person, that so much crime exists."

"I am an old man, Mr. L., and when I am mouldering in the grave, you may remember what I say. Never trust to yourself to combat temptations; and, if you are drawn into one, let it be a warning to you to guard against others. I am certain you perceived a constraint in my manner."

"Truly I did, but you could not know me, and you were right in using precaution."

"I have been taught caution in the school of affliction. You said this place was a sweet abode; it is; but it has lost those who made it so to me.

To-night you need rest; but if you will give me your company in the morning, I will relate the heads of my history."

"Now," said Mr. Morgan, "I will tell you why you find me less frank and hospitable than my countrymen usually are. My father was a surgeon in extensive practice at Caermarthen, and he had only two children to share his property. He much wished me to follow his profession; but, as I entertained a great dislike to it, he gave way to my prejudices, and I received the best education Caermarthen could afford. A clergyman resident in Hampshire was a particular friend of my father's, and, through his influence with him, I was allowed to study for the church, and, at twenty-five, I was ordained by the Bishop of Winchester. A curacy of £50 per annum was my first employment; and while I was labouring in a most unfruitful soil, I received a violent letter from my father, informing me that my sister Harriet had eloped with a young officer in the East India Company's Service, and commanding me to pursue them. I was greatly grieved; I knew not where to trace the fugitives; but, while I hesitated, I received a letter from my sister, in which she signed her name 'Harriet Vernon,' and declared she was going to Madras with her husband.

"Had my father been a harsh parent, I should not have wondered at her conduct; but he was not; and I wrote her an answer strongly expressing my

disapprobation of the improper step she had taken. I likewise told her to remember how many thousand miles would intervene between us if she went to Madras, and concluded by telling her to seek for her father's forgiveness.

“To this letter I received a most unkind reply : ‘She had pleased herself, and she did not want any of my prosing : I should not preach her out of her senses.’ Of Mrs. V. I heard no more for years.

“I had just married the daughter of the gentleman I mentioned, and been appointed his curate, when my father sent for me. He had retired for some years, and, being pleased with this part of the country, he built this house, and furnished it as you see. Mrs. Morgan accompanied me, and my father shortly addressed me :

“‘I am getting old now, David, and your sister's conduct has nearly broken my heart. There is plenty of work for a zealous, active, clergyman in this part of the country, and the parish church is not above five miles distant. The rector is very feeble, and would be glad of your assistance. You must stop here, and take care of me as long as I live. Mrs. Morgan's father must be nearly as worn out as myself; so ask him to come and keep us company.’

“He did; and, for some years, we enjoyed great happiness. The only drawback was the continued silence of my sister, and the loss of two of my children, which left me the father of one daughter. Mrs. Morgan's father died in the seventy-fifth year

of his age, and my respected parent did not long survive him. Our grief for their loss was deep and sincere; but it was tempered by the assurance that, freed from every ill, they were receiving the reward of their useful Christian lives. My father left me the whole of his property, which consisted of this house and grounds, and £2000 in the funds. The rector of the parish had died some years before, but his successor was a young man, and, too fashionable to reside here, he had appointed me his curate. We were happy, too happy to expect its continuance; and the French Revolution, which has caused so much misery, made us its victims.

“A vessel containing some French refugees, who had escaped from L'Orient, was wrecked on the coast of Pembroke, and a French nobleman and his son were thrown, destitute and unfriended, on the mercy of a patient of my father's. The man was poor, and could afford to do little for them, but he bethought of sending them to me; he gave them some silver, told them I lived somewhere near Landilovawr, and that was the best direction he could give them. Their situation must have been pitiable—the father sunk under his fatigues, and received an unmarked and humble grave in a village churchyard. The young Marquess reached here, he told his tale of suffering, and met with welcome and assistance. I told you that my Rector was a fashionable man, perhaps it was his rank made him so, but he never hesitated to relieve the distressed; he listened to my recommendation,

and appointed the Marquess Aulairville French tutor to his brothers. 'I shall drop my empty title,' said the young man; 'but you will see me whenever I can come.' He kept his promise. When the Rector came to reside at the parsonage for a few months, Mons. Aulairville accompanied him, and frequently visited us. He visited us too often, he became attached to my daughter, and I was thunderstruck when my Laura declared she preferred him to the brothers of the Rector; in fact, to any one she knew. Religion was an insuperable objection; I refused my consent, and Mons. A. soon after departed with his pupils, for London. Laura had acquiesced in silence, but I soon found that she was more interested than I feared. You may have heard of Welsh obstinacy, mine was overcome, and I reluctantly gave my consent to my daughter's marriage with Mons. A. Some of the best families in Wales are still Catholics; the confessor of one of them married them, by the Catholic ritual, and I read our ceremony. I had little fault to find with Aulairville: Laura went with him to London, and I did not see her for five years; he had finished the education of the Rector's brothers, and was then instructing the children of Viscount D——. My daughter did not look well, she did not complain, but I was certain that the lover and the husband were different characters. Aulairville was imperious and passionate, Laura was accustomed to affection and mildness; the errors of her husband affected her;

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his sins against his own accommodating religion sensibly hurt her who had been brought up in the purity of ours.

"The young lady you saw was four, and her brother two, years old, when I first saw them; and when my daughter again visited us, Aulaireville had gone to France. Mons. A. remained abroad for some time; he was not attached to the Royal Family, and his name appeared as one of the officers of the First Consul. It appeared singular to me that the Marquess Aulaireville should not wish his wife and children to receive the benefits of his recovered property, and I felt myself hurt at his silence. He apologized for it by a reference to the state of the country, and the imperative duty of attending his general. But when peace came he had no longer that excuse, and he was compelled to state the truth.

"He had been married, and had left his wife under the care of her brother, who, being a patriot, had some opportunities of protecting her. The Marquise Aulaireville was still living, and received at the Court of Bonaparte, in fact, she held some office about the person of Josephine. Are you now surprized, sir, that I should hesitate to admit a stranger to my dwelling?"

"Certainly not, sir; I am only surprized that you can behave complacently to any one," answered Mr. L.

"The precepts of our Divine Master, sir, command us to do good even to those who have

injured us; a stranger cannot possibly have done so, and therefore I wish to be cordial to all. But the fame of your virtues has reached even this remote spot; I have heard your name mentioned with approbation, and I have read your writings with delight. I feel myself and my house honoured by your presence."

"In pity cease to compliment me, sir: if it be not too great a trial of your feelings, may I ask how your daughter bore the discovery of the Marquess's villany?"

"More calmly than I expected; but it was an outward peace only: she read his letter with indignation. 'What does he mean, my dear father, by asserting his attachment to me and his children? had he really loved me he would not have deceived us. For myself I care little, but I know, my dear father, that you will be blamed for want of care and common prudence, and your character will be attacked because your daughter has been made miserable.'

"The letter enclosed an order on a banker at Bristol for £3000, which he requested might be for the use of Miss Morgan and her children. 'I dare say, my dear father, that the Marquess expects we shall send this money back; but he has wronged his children sufficiently: were he to bestow all his wealth upon them, he could not make them adequate amends; for myself, it will not be long I shall need anything.'

"My dear girl was right; she gradually declined; yet, even when dying, her last prayer was that he

who had so deeply wronged her might be forgiven by the Allwise Disposer of the destinies of men. Mrs. Morgan never recovered the shock, and I was left to take care of my grandchildren. I was scarcely fit for the task, and with Laura I have had great trouble. She resembles her mother in person, and in sweetness of disposition, but she has all the fatal French vivacity and heedlessness that rendered her father so captivating and so guilty."

"But I hope, sir, you will not experience any further trouble," said Mr. L.: "from your appearance, no one would suppose you had known so much."

"Very few, indeed, believe it; but I thank God I am resigned to His will; I am getting very aged now, and I have thought that, instead of repining at the loss of any good, I ought to be thankful that I had enjoyed it so long. I ought to have told you that my sister, Mrs. Vernon, returned to England a few years since, and came here; she bitterly mourned her disobedience to her kind father, and dearly had she suffered for it. Her husband had been promoted, and, always proud and imperious, he became unbearable and very grossly ill-treated her. A fever, brought on by intemperance, terminated his life, and left her a widow in the fifty-first year of her age. She remained in India a few years, and, finding her health decline, determined to come to England. She told me she could not die in peace until she should have been reconciled to me."

" 'I wish,' she mournfully said, 'that I had allowed my father to judge for me, he was right when he told me, how much soever I might admire Capt. Vernon, I should never be happy as his wife.' She heard of the Marquess's conduct, and proposed that the children should bear her name, saying she should leave them what property she possessed. I hesitated for some time, but she convinced me that it would be better, as no one would recognize the illegitimate children of the Marquess Aulairville in Augustus and Laura Vernon. My dear daughter eagerly caught at the offer, and I believe that one thing that soothed her mind was that, in consequence of the arrangement of their aunt, few persons would be able to wound their feelings by a reference to their birth. In this secluded situation, there are very few who have time to notice their neighbours, and, of those who have, few are so unfeeling as to insult an old man, who must have sunk beneath such accumulated sorrows, if the mercy of his Creator had not supported him through them. I regret to say that there are some who have taunted me with my misfortunes, and I have been told that, had I not compromised my faith by consenting to my daughter's marriage with a Catholic, I should not have brought calamity upon my family. Perhaps it was wrong: I do not think such marriages calculated to promote religion, as the parties cannot conscientiously use the same devotional forms. Yet, what could I do? My daughter was miserable, and as

Aulaireville promised never to interfere with his wife in the education of her children, I thought I could not be doing very wrong ; alas ! I knew not that he intended to desert them."

"Perhaps, sir, they who censured you for liberality towards a Catholic had better correct themselves. I think the Scripture maxim is 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.'"

"You are right, Mr. L., I should not have wearied you with my dull tale, had I not known who you were, but I felt some apology was due to Mr. L."

Mr. L. smiled, and the venerable and truly respectable clergyman asked him if he would wish to walk round the grounds. Mr. L. assented, and frequently had occasion to commend.

"My father," said Mr. Morgan, "possessed some taste, but the praise of much of this ornament and elegance is due to Mrs. Morgan : my poor Laura, too, resembled her mother ; they were always contriving some little innocent decoration or entertainment to make home agreeable."

Miss Vernon came to her grandfather, exclaiming,—“Oh ! do you know, grandfather, I have had such work with Augustus, he has lost his book, he has plucked up some Michaelmas daisies, and knocked down some pears."

"And, I dare say, you helped him, Laura."

Miss Vernon's nearly transparent cheeks were dyed with blushes, as she answered, "Well, grandpa, I did."

"Go—you are a sad wild girl: go to your aunt.

My sister," said Mr. M., turning to his guest, "has not been able to leave her room for some time."

"I will not detain you longer, sir," said Mr. L. : "receive my thanks for your hospitality, and allow me to direct my servant to prepare himself to attend me."

Mr. M. accompanied him to the house, and left him for a few minutes : while he was gone, Mr. L. placed a £10 note between the leaves of the old family Bible ; and then, wishing Mr. M. health and happiness, he mounted his horse and rode off.

Every welcome that L— castle could afford was offered to Mr. L. ; but, whether it was that the noble owner was no favourite with him, or that he was impatient to see his mother, he did not feel at ease, and, after remaining a fortnight, he sent his groom on with the horses, and took a place in a London coach. Very reluctantly the nobleman parted with him, and earnestly requested the favour of a visit when he returned to England.

"I will write, my lord," said Mr. L. : "should circumstances prevent my personally informing you of what you wish to know."

"I am glad you are come, Arthur," exclaimed his mother, when he clasped her hand, and eagerly asked if she were well.

A week passed over, at the expiration of which Mr. Leclerc proposed visiting his estate in —shire."

"Yes, certainly," said Mrs. L. : "it is time you did: I will go too."

A wet afternoon confined them to the house. Mr. L. was writing, his mother was apparently reading, but she did not seem to pay much attention to her book, for she dropped it from her hand, and said aloud, "Yes, I should rejoice."

"At what, my dear mother?" said Mr. L., raising his head.

"At seeing you married, Arthur."

Mr. L. laughed— "What an idea!"

"You will marry, some time or other, Arthur, and I should like to see your wife."

"Why, I—in truth, I never thought about it," was her son's answer.

"What a compliment to the ladies, Arthur! were I a young one, I would not accept one of you learned gentlemen, you are so abstracted and absent; but I do not know how it is, let a man be ever so dull and disagreeable, he will find a wife."

"Then I am dull and disagreeable!" said Mr. L. smiling.

"No, no; you understand me very well: but how old are you Arthur?"

"Three-and-twenty."

"You are young enough, certainly, but I feel my health fail, and I should like to see you happily married before"—

"Oh! stop, my dear mother, do not allude to what I cannot bear to contemplate. I will give you a sketch of five ladies, not one of whom, I believe, would refuse the honour of being your daughter in law; and if you approve of any one of them, I will marry her to morrow."

"I can tell, by your irony, Arthur, that there is some fault attaching to each, but your description will amuse me this dull afternoon."

"The eldest is a fine woman, well educated, well born, rich, a few years my senior."

"That is out of the question," said Mrs. L. : "no wife older than yourself, my dear child."

"It is part of the portrait, my dear mother. She is clever, proud, passionate, and avaricious."

"The next," said Mr. L. : "is pretty, graceful, well born, and well connected, like the other, but she has little fortune; she is not proud, neither is she passionate, and she is religious,—if going to church and receiving the sacrament constitute it: she is my own age."

"Go on," Arthur.

"Miss — is about two years younger than I am: she is plain, proud, well informed, dances well, writes well, speaks without affectation, is rather reserved, has a large fortune, and very great friends."

"Go on."

"Lady — is young, lovely, sweet-tempered, clever, is thoughtful, religious, kind to the unfortunate, patient with the perverse, courteous to all. You know her family. She has no energy, is good because she has been taught to be so, and would prefer a pack of cards to a Bible."

"At this rate, Arthur, no one will please you, but sketch the fifth."

"Is seventeen, beautiful as the eye ever gazed on, and warm-hearted as the Italians, she possesses

great accomplishments, and knows Hebrew and Greek."

"That is a recommendation with me, certainly," said Mrs. L. Mr. L. smiled and continued, "and is perfectly mistress of Arabic; her family and fortune are unexceptionable, her manners elegant; her influence extensive. So much for the bright side of her character, will you hear the other?"

Mrs. L. nodded.

"Her pride is so intolerable that she never goes to church, because she will not sit with her inferiors, or be taught her duty by one who is less noble than herself; she is revengeful, believes in predestination, admires Voltaire, and says she will die unmarried."

"I think so, Arthur: at least, I should regret to see her your wife: you have drawn portraits, certainly; but have you met with no amiable women, accomplished, too, and undisfigured by any of the faults you have named?"

"Yes many, very many, but they want that certain indescribable something which would be necessary to attach me to one person for life."

"You have told me what you do not like; tell me what you would wish your wife to be!"

"I should like her to be younger, but not much younger, than myself: where the gentleman is ten or twenty years the senior there may be a doubt as to whether affection is the governing principle. I should like her to be a well educated, but not a learned, lady: Christian principles, and right moral

conduct would be questions of paramount importance. Neither strikingly beautiful, nor plainly insignificant; affable to all, but mostly so to me; able to give and receive pleasure in society, but chiefly entertaining at home; fond of music, but not to the exclusion of reading; possessing so much knowledge of the world as would guard her against its allurements, but with a mind untainted with a cognizance of its crimes; free from pride and passion, yet neither deficient in self-respect nor firmness; charitable, but not indiscriminately so, and more fond of doing good in secret than before the world; particular in her dress, but not fine; and as wishful to soothe my sorrowful and languid hours as to share my gay and happy ones."

"There is no such woman in the world, Arthur: you may search it through, and you will not find an original of the portrait you have drawn."

"There must have been some such female, how else could I imagine one? Is it very unlike my dear mother?"

"Yes, for I was proud, passionate, and uncharitable, and more anxious to please myself than my husband."

"Not so, my dear mother: but if I meet with such a lady, I will marry; if not, I will neither sacrifice my feelings at the altar of interest nor ambition."

M. Leclerc wished his mother to accompany him to Italy. "I do not wish to be disturbed," mentally remarked Mrs. L.: "I find a difference

between fifty-four and twenty-six; and home and all its comforts are dear to me; yet it is Arthur's desire, and if I refuse, and he should fall into improper company, for the want of domestic society, I should only have myself to blame. Most young, aye, and prudent, men would prefer roving by themselves, and why should I hurt him by refusing, when he begs me to go?"

"I will go with you, Arthur," she said aloud. And, in the month of November, Mr. L. obtained passports through France, and they landed at Calais on the first of December.

CHAPTER IV.

Miss Manvers regularly improved. She had mastered the difficulty of learning, and, though she still found it irksome, it was no longer dreadful. She acquired music very rapidly ; she possessed a good ear, and was a very regular timist. She played some Italian duets very well, and began to practise Spanish pieces. Her instructresses were delighted ; they thought her amendment the triumph of their own skilful treatment, and an idea that had often occurred to them became rooted in their minds. They believed themselves capable of being first-rate teachers. They disliked the solitude of their residence, and they determined to visit London, and establish a school, whenever their father should be taken from them. His increasing infirmities seemed to indicate that it would not be long before a change would take place. A very short time did, indeed, deprive them of a kind and excellent parent, whose chief care had been the promotion of their comforts by every compliance with their wishes which his income could afford. He was neither a learned man

nor a fashionable one, nor did he possess any great refinement of mind ; but he did his duty as a subject, and worshipped his Maker in truth and sincerity. His life had been a long, and, in comparison with others, a happy one, and his death was peaceful and serene. Gertrude wept when she saw the cold corpse, and witnessed the tears of the daughters.

"How dreadful is death!" she thought, as she viewed the closed eyes and pale cheeks of the remains of Mr. Owen. "Who would think that any one could look like this that saw him in life and health! And must I die, and such a man as Mr. Leclerc, must he die? Oh, but I hope it will be a long while first," she said aloud, and then sobbed bitterly.

"What do you hope, Gertrude?" inquired the Signora; but she received no answer to her question, and a moment after she forgot that she had asked it.

Mr. Owen was buried; and Gertrude, who had received a gold watch on one birthday, was habited in deep mourning on the next.

A few weeks after the interment of her father the Signora wrote to Mr. Dawson:—

"My dear Sir,

"It has pleased the Almighty to deprive us of our respected parent. His death, although long looked for, has yet been a great shock, and has rendered our removal from Caernarvonshire almost compulsory. His income, which has ceased with his life, contributed to render us more comfortable than we should otherwise have been; and, while he could superintend

the labourers on the farm, we did well with it; but we do not understand these things, and are not equal to the task of contending with the vulgar. As we have been offered £1500 for it, with leave to remove any articles we wish, we think it will be to our interest to accept it; the more so as my brother has married an American female, and intends settling in Virginia. We think of commencing a school, but in Wales it would be folly to do so, and we shall be much obliged if you will engage a house for us in any genteel part of Surrey near Richmond. My knowledge of Italian, Spanish, and the acquaintance I have with the Florentine drawings, &c., qualify me to give instruction without the aid of masters, and my sisters are equally competent to attend to music, French, and the other *et ceteras* of a polite education. You would be able to recommend us some pupils; and a gentleman of rank and extensive connection could most materially advance our interest. You must have heard of Arthur Leclerc, Esq., and it is him of whom I speak. He has a very elegant villa on the banks of the Thames; and I believe he would serve us; I am sure he could. I speak of him that you may not think our plan chimerical; the success which has attended our efforts to instruct Gertrude leads me to hope that we should not fail with others, very few of whom could labour under her disadvantages. A very beneficial change has taken place; she is growing quite a genteel, pretty girl, and will not be a bad scholar.

"Favour me with an answer as soon as may be convenient, and believe me, my dear sir,

"Very faithfully, your obliged friend,

"CLARA ORSINI."

The Signora did not receive an answer for some weeks. Mr. Dawson informed her that he had taken a house consisting of ten rooms, which was he thought, quite large enough for a speculation : if they succeeded, they could easily procure a larger one, if they did not, the expense would be quite heavy enough. If he could oblige them in any other way, he would willingly do so.

"That is settled," said the Signora : "now, Emma, how are we to get to London?"

"I think we had better go by sea; take a passage on board some vessel for London; we can then take our instruments, and the furniture we should wish to retain."

"You are right," observed Miss Owen; "yet I dread the passage of the Bristol Channel."

"I do not admire it," said Miss Emma; "but consider, Sarah, how heavy the expense of land travelling is."

"With our small income, it would be ridiculous to attempt it, Emma."

"There are but £800 in the funds, and if we do not succeed, what is to become of us?" was the Signora's reply.

"Where are we to write to Mr. Leclerc, Clara?"

"We shall ascertain that in London, Sarah. At present we must prepare for our journey there."

Gertrude heard, with regret, that they were going to London; she dreaded her mother too much to wish to be in her vicinity; and Mr. Dawson had informed her that, after staying ten months at Hast-

ings, Mrs. Lumley had returned to London, and taken a house in the neighbourhood of Hackney. There she did not stop long, allured by the prospect of obtaining gentlemen boarders, through her husband's connexions, she had gone to Cambridge, and established a boarding house. Some female relatives of the University students resided with her, and she might have lived very respectably, but her miserable vice prevailed, and, being detected in acts of great meanness, for which theft would not be an improper term, she lost her boarders, and was compelled to quit the city, as she could not support the expense of the house which she had taken.

Mr. D.'s last letter had informed Gertrude that her mother was living in some part of Kent. Miss M.'s geographical knowledge informed her that the counties of Kent and Surrey were contiguous, and the idea of being so near her mother was dreadful. Solitary and uncomfortable as her life then was, it was happiness compared with the time she spent with Mrs. Lumley; and, while she gazed on the mountains of Caernarvon, she half wished she was buried under them. The river Conway, which separates Caernarvon and Denbigh shires, flowed past the Villa Orsini; the window of Gertrude's room commanded a clear view of it, and she looked at it with agony.

"What would I give to be one of those fishermen, and able to do as I like! but now I am a young lady to be sure, and I must go to horrid, dis-

agreeable London and Mrs. Lumley. I shall never go on that pretty river again, with Mr. Leclerc, nor shall I amuse myself with gathering the wild flowers on its banks. I wish I could die, could dissolve myself into air, and rove about here as a zephyr!"

The draught of the open casement blew her hair off her forehead; Gertrude thought it was something of an answer to her wish, and she actually knelt down, and prayed that she might become wind. But, notwithstanding this, she continued in a visible shape, and accompanied the Signora and her sisters on board the vessel which was to convey them to London.

"Nothing but sea and sky, sky and sea!" exclaimed Gertrude, in a dissatisfied tone, when she came on deck, one morning.

"We shall soon see something not quite so agreeable," said Miss Owen: and, turning to the Captain she said,—"Are we not near the Bishop and his Clerks?"

"The Bishop and his Clerks?" repeated Miss Manvers. "I should be glad to see them, but where are they to come from?"

The Captain laughed, the Signora bit her lip, and looked at her sister.

"Gertrude, have you forgotten the lesson you had some time since? To give you instruction is to waste time."

Gertrude was conscious that she did not deserve the reproof, for they had not explained it, but she

said nothing, and the master of the vessel remarked,

“On the coast of Pembroke, off St. David's, are a cluster of grey rocks, eight or ten in number; they are tremendously high, and have caused many a poor fellow a watery grave. In stormy weather, when the wind blows to the coast, they are most dangerous; it is almost impossible to keep off them. A few years ago, I was bound from the Levant to Liverpool, and had to put into Milford to perform quarantine. I did not admire the confinement, and, as I knew we were perfectly free from infection, I sent for my wife. I had left her in a passion, and, as she was with a relative, with whom I was no favourite, I did not think she would come; but she did; her uncle dined out, and she took a coach, and went to London; by my desire, she always travelled in the mail. Take my advice, ladies, it may appear a little more expensive, but it is not so in the end. I have known something of journeying, both by sea and land, and I proscribed those heavy coaches some years since. If there be any vacancy in the inside, the coachman will slip in one or two of the outside passengers, no matter what they may be, or however disagreeable. My wife was once dreadfully annoyed, and had her dress spoiled by a dirty creature that the guard put in, for an extra shilling. Now in the mails you are free from these things, and have generally respectable companions: so, by my desire, my wife came by the mail. Poor thing, she had enough of it, it was shocking weather, the cold was so intense that she was nearly

frozen, and the horses at one time were up to their necks in snow. They could not get on, and they had a vast many uncomfortables; my wife could not stand them, she was brought up a lady, and she was laid up by the time she got to Milford. She was half dead and nearly mad with the toothe-ache when she came aboard, and I called her a fool for coming, till she got better. I had got few medicines left, we had had a long passage, and they were nearly all used, such as I had I gave her, but they did her no good, and she walked the state room day and night. I was smoking my pipe one night, and she was moaning, as usual; here, said I, and I handed it to her, try this. She was never the best of tempers, and she flew at me, 'What did I mean by that? it was enough for her to suffer pain, and I need not mock her.' However, I persuaded her to try it, and she found relief from it; its a curious remedy, certainly, but if any one has the tooth-ache, let him or her smoke a cigar."

"I would die, first," said Miss Emma.

"Eh! that is easily said: but, however, my wife got rid of her pain, though she was still very much indisposed, and was not able to go on shore, when our quarantine expired. I got what things I wanted, at Milford, and off we went: it was very fine when we sailed, but the next day, by George, we caught it. About evening it blew fresh, but during the night it was a heavy gale; the sea boiled, and every time the ship was on the top of one wave, I feared a yet higher one would overwhelm her.

You have heard of waves running mountains high, but it is not the height to which a ship is carried that makes the danger ; in a great storm, the sea resembles a valley, with high hills on each side of it, if a ship is light, and gets on the top of the wave, she is safe ; but if, before she can rise, the sea advances, it sweeps over her, and she goes down."

The Signora shuddered. "How dreadful!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, ma'am ; but the death is easy, it is the watchfulness, the hanging between hope and fear, life and death, that makes the misery of shipwreck ; it is not the actual thing itself, it is its precursors that render us miserable. We see death before us, we think of those we have left at home, who will never know our end, and we are wretched. But to go back to the storm ; I saw we should have it, and I got all in readiness ; my wife was confined to her bed, and there I told her to stop, and to hold tight by the supporters. I was never in a worse storm in my life ; for twenty-four hours we never left the deck, we were drenched, and, every other minute, the sea washed over the deck, and carried over the bulwarks and boats, the water casks and everything that was upon deck. We were then off these horrid rocks, and, almost by a miracle, we got the sails all set. We watched the canvass anxiously enough : had the smallest sail given way, we must have gone upon them. The ship trembled, every splinter of her was set in

motion, by trying to clear them; the waves beat tremendously towards them, and the canvass offered but a feeble resistance to their impetuosity. At last the wind abated, and I managed to get down below, and a pretty spectacle there was: the ashes had been thrown from the grate, and the lamps from their hooks; my desk, and a large chest, were smashed to pieces, and every article they contained was drenched with salt water and rum. I was compelled to keep the spirits under my eye, and a puncheon of rum, which was fastened down to the cabin floor, had been staved in, by the chest being hurled against it. The doors of the closets, and the tops of the lockers were forced open, by the striking of the contents against them, occasioned by the heaving of the ship. We had not tasted food for nearly thirty-two hours, and I had hoped to find some we could eat; but the meat we had left was completely destroyed, and the wood was so wet that we could not kindle a fire. I dreaded entering my state room, for I did not expect to find my wife alive: she was shockingly bruised by being thrown against the wood sides of the bed place, and her hands were blistered with holding by the rails. She scarcely believed that I was alive, the raging of the sea had drowned our voices, and for hours she thought that we were all washed overboard. She told me afterwards that she put her hand over the side of the bed place, to ascertain if the water had reached so high, and that she was quite resigned and calm. The dead lights"—

"What are they?" said Gertrude.

"How can you presume to interrupt any person?" said the Signora, "you have been told of that before."

"It is not very polite, certainly," said the captain, "yet I like a child to ask questions. It shows she pays attention to what is said. The better way, my dear, is to remember and ask when the person has done speaking."

"Yes, sir; I have been told to do so, but if I do not speak at once, I forget."

"You must exercise your memory; the dead lights are large thick shutters, fastened outside the windows to protect the glass, on this occasion they were washed away, and, seeing the light, my wife concluded that the water was making its way through the shattered glass: and that she would be drowned by its overflowing the cabin. Happily the gale abated, and I was spared to see the damage repaired. That day we were completely exhausted, we had no dry clothing, nor any provision which we could use; we steered for Milford, and got back before the gale came on again. We had bad weather for several days, and were much knocked about in the haven. However, we got to rights, and we had at last as fine a passage to Liverpool as ever I had in my life. Many, very many, who sailed with us at the first outset were never heard of more, and the owner of the ship who was himself at Liverpool had given us up. He was standing on the quay, when the vessel entered the dock, and came on

board immediately, he shook my hand, and told me he was glad to see me, but he never expected it."

"I dare say, your wife never went again," said Miss Emma.

"She did. Capt. Smith sold the vessel I had, and recommended me to a Scotch gentleman, who was the owner of several ships, he gave me one of 500 tons, one of the finest that ever man set foot upon; she was chartered for the West Indies, and my lady would go, too; but that voyage was almost enough, yet she would have gone to Antwerp with me, but I put her ashore at Portsmouth, where she had some friends; and when I came home, I had a little daughter to look after, and plague enough she is. Miss is so delicate that she cannot be sent to school, because her health would be injured by confinement; she is spoilt, her mother makes a fool of her, and if I was not attentive she would be a dunce. She is, aye she always was, full of mischief. I am very particular in some things, I always wash my own salad; I was going into the garden to cut some, and I heard a strange rumbling in the kitchen; I knew the girl was out, and thought some thief had got in at the area window. So down I went, and there was Miss, her fine frock completely wet, and the floor the same. The servant had been at some of your slop daudling, and Miss was very busy with the scrubbing-brush and house cloth. 'Who did this?' she looked at me, at herself and the floor, but no answer. I repeated the question, and

she stammered out, 'Han—Han—Hannah did it Pa.' Oh! you little liar, I said, I will make you remember this, how dare you offer to deceive me? Away she ran crying to her mother: There, said I, see how soon your"—

"Oh! do not swear," said the Signora.

"Well, your deceptive sex then, commence their artfulness: here is a child of two years old who cannot speak plain, yet she can frame a falsehood, and, in her way, utter it."

The Signora smiled, "How long did your anger last, sir?"

"Not long: she is my own, my only, child, she is my darling."

Gertrude walked away, the captain was considered an unkind man, and not without reason; he had risen from a humble station, and, having met hardship in all quarters of the globe, he had no sympathy with those who shrunk from suffering. He conceived that discipline could not be maintained without severity; he treated sailors as brutes, and he found them so: his commands, imperiously given, were sullenly obeyed, and the obedience he exacted from them was reluctantly shown. Yet he was a talented man, and, among those who knew him, he was generally sought; he had friends in abundance when he wanted them not, and his superiors did not disdain to avail themselves of his knowledge, or to be entertained by the display of his convivial qualities. When he spoke of his daughter his features relaxed, and Miss M. felt that the love he bore her was the

more valuable because his affection was not lavished upon others.

"Happy little girl," she said, mentally, "you have a dear mother to take care of you, and a fond father is coming to load you with presents and caresses! Ah, I wish I were you."

Yet could Gertrude have known the future fate of that child, could she have imagined the many misfortunes which she was to meet, even she would not wished to exchange situations with her. To each his sufferings;—and had Miss M. remembered this she would have learnt to be thankful for what she had, not to repine at what she had not. Resignation is a hard lesson to learn; but, after all, impatience only aggravates the evils we wish to cure.

In the afternoon, the Captain called to Gertrude. "There," he said, "are the rocks." She shuddered as she viewed them, though the water then gently rippled over the base. Here and there a craggy point projected, and gave evidence of the danger which lurked beneath, as well as above, the surface of the water.

The weather continued fine, and Miss M. was frequently on deck: one of the sailors was a native of Portugal; on one occasion he gave some offence to his commander, who, among other things, abused his religion, and its Continental absurdities.

"You have travelled, madam," he said, addressing the Signora. "Were you ever in Lisbon?"

"No, sir."

" You suffered no loss, it is a most filthy city, I may say it is the dunghill of the universe : and the people ! they and their monkeys are well matched. Good Friday was observed their way the last time I was there, and a fine hubbub there was : as soon as it was light, the Tagus was all uproar, and presently what should we see but a great log of wood hoisted out of their best ship of war ! They called the thing a figure ; it had eyes, certainly, and something like a mouth, that was the only resemblance it bore to anything human. All day long they thrashed the wood ; it was in the river, then it was pulled out, drawn up to the mast-head and well whipped, then lowered again and so they worked on till night, when it was taken on shore and burned in the square."

" And what is all that for ?" said Miss Owen.

" The log, ma'am, is to represent Judas Iscariot, and the beating it receives is to testify their abhorrence of his guilt. On that day, too, a figure is entombed, and disinterred on Easter Sunday, as a representation of Our Saviour's suffering ; but the latter custom is common in all Catholic countries, and is practised even in England. I do not like foreign sailors, they are idle, dirty, and malicious ; but in war time it is catch as catch can, we must put up with it."

After a beautiful passage of five days, the vessel safely entered the Thames, and, as Gertrude viewed the shores of Kent and Essex, forming, when seen together, a not unpleasing contrast, she felt that

there was yet something beautiful in the place, although her mother was near it. When the waterman came on board at Blackwall, the Signora, her sisters and Gertrude, bade adieu to the captain, who, a few years after, with many others, met a watery grave in the Western Ocean. The Signora and her friends remained at Blackwall till the morning, when she engaged a coach to convey them to the house which Mr. D. had engaged for them; it was well furnished, and they were much pleased with it. Mr. Dawson called on them in the evening, and was very much gratified at finding Gertrude so much improved. Miss M. did not ask after her mother, neither did Mr. D. name her. A few weeks rendered them quite at home in their new habitation. Gertrude ceased to regret the change, especially as Mr. Dawson exerted himself to procure them pupils, and they received promises of three boarders after the Christmas vacation. The Signora's intention of writing to Mr. Leclerc was frustrated by his return to England fifteen months after he had quitted it.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed, when his mother resumed her station by her own fire-side; "thank God, we are once more at home."

Mrs. and Mr. L. had seen sufficient to make them value it; the whole Continent was torn to pieces by intestine divisions, and racked with the fears of the tyranny of the victorious French, who had carried with them Atheism and immorality, inflicting misery and death upon the unhappy people whose coun-

tries they had destroyed. Mr. Leclerc's arrival was soon known, and as soon as etiquette would permit, the Signora wrote, and in a fortnight Mr. L. called. He said he was much surprised at the contents of her letter, and he listened patiently to her, while she unfolded her plans, and requested his assistance.

"I tell you candidly, ma'am, that if you wish me to recommend your establishment, you must alter your system of tuition."

The Signora would be happy to alter any part of her system that might be incorrect, if Mr. L. would kindly point it out.

"I have not time to enter into the subject now, Madam; but I will write you a few hints, and, if you can adopt them, my assistance (so far as it extends) shall not be wanting."

The Signora felt the implied reproofs, though she had not candour enough to acknowledge that she deserved them.

"My dear Madam,

"I have ever considered the education of the young a most important duty: assuredly it is one, but it is misunderstood and perverted. To give young people a proper estimation of their rank and station, to teach them a few dazzling accomplishments, and to tell them that virtue is honourable and vice its opposite, is all that is thought necessary. But they are not told in what virtue or vice consists; that they are left to learn; and no wonder that they make shipwreck of the one, and become disciples of the other.

'Tis education forms the common mind ;
Just as the twig is bent, the tree 's inclined.'

How responsible, then, are they who have that twig in their hands, and who may dispose and turn it as they think fit ! Believe me, madam, education is a much more serious thing than it is generally thought, and of many prevailing forms I do not approve.

“ One that I most dislike is the making of the Bible a class-book. I do not admire it in a school at all ; there is much in it which your scholars do not understand, and much which it would be improper for them to know ; yet childhood is inquisitive, and it is right that they should request an explanation of what is unknown. If, therefore, the Bible is to be read, let those parts only be selected which a teacher may discourse upon without giving her pupils a knowledge of those subjects unfit for them to be acquainted with. I know it is customary with some to have the books read successively. How absurd this is I am sure I need not say to the Signora Orsini ; but there is one practice against which I wish to caution you. I have observed that, when your pupil failed in executing any task to your satisfaction, you invariably assigned some verses of the Sacred Writings to be learnt as a punishment for displeasing you. This is certainly wrong. The principle of human nature revolts from any thing coercive, or that is prescribed as a duty ; and it is certainly improper to render the Bible an object of abhorrence. I would suggest the propriety of teaching those who may be placed under your care to regard that book, as it is, a blessing ; and, were I a teacher, I should wish them to esteem the privilege of hearing and reading portions of it as the highest happiness they could enjoy. But I object to its being classed with other books. Some portion of the morning and evening of every day should be

devoted to the study of its contents, the middle of the day might be employed in the usual manner.

"By adopting this method, confusion would be avoided, necessary and ornamental knowledge would be acquired during school hours, and that irreverence which is manifested towards the Bible as a school-book would no longer be found to prevail among children of all ages. It is the more easy to act upon this plan, as you intend to receive only boarders; they will be entirely under your care, and, while they remain with you, you occupy their parents' places, and are responsible for your conduct towards them. It is to be lamented that instructors in general pay so little attention to the first duties of life, they think they do enough when they infuse certain ideas into the minds of their pupils, and when they have made them acquainted with certain sciences. And, you perhaps, will think that I recommend you to practise works of supererogation, when I advise you to conduct your seminary on religious principles. But I imagine not. It is above all things necessary that the female mind be early and deeply tinctured with religion; prevented by their delicacy from gaining in the world that experience of it which is often our guard against its temptations, it is requisite that your sex be able to oppose a resistance founded on innate principles to the allurements which constantly assail them.

Hard is the fortune that your sex attends;
 Women, like princes, find no real friends:
 All who approach them their own ends pursue;
 Lovers and ministers are never true.

Experience, my dear madam, teaches us that these lines verge on truth, and the sense which nature gives us will likewise inform us that those most need protection who are most exposed

to danger. Let then religion be engrafted on the mind, and right principles will direct proper conduct ; pride may do much, but it is not to be depended upon, it is kept alive by adulation, excess of homage intoxicates the brain, increases self conceit, and produces too great a confidence in our own powers. They fail us in the hour of trial, and we find worldly wisdom a very inefficient substitute for christian simpleness. Upon this subject I should not have dwelt so long, but that I should consider myself accountable to my friends for the right tuition of their children if, through my recommendation, they were induced to place them with you. You will not, therefore, I trust, feel offended by the observations which I have felt myself called upon to make : a few more, and I have done.

“ History, biography, and geography, are delightful and instructive studies ; I would say, give them precedence ; next let music be offered to the learner’s notice, it is a sublime and an ennobling science, it elevates the mind, raises the spirits, and frequently proves an antidote to the cares and distractions of life. Sacred music more especially does so, and the easier Psalms of the church might be soon acquired. I decidedly object to the introduction of foreign music, until the pupil is familiar with the languages in which it is written ; and then great care is necessary in the selection of pieces, some ought never to disgrace the instrument of a delicate female, unfortunately the same remark applies to some compositions by our own masters. Fine needle-work is all very well, but I should not compel any one to attend to it, it may, I think, be stated that, in general, girls who are clever at their needle, and boys who are great Latin versifiers, seldom excel in any thing else. As regards dancing, I hope you will not allow waltzing ; I detest it, it may suit Spain very well, but I am astonished that it has gained a place

among the amusements of us sober English. In conclusion, I would say, do not require the attention to be given to too many things at once; the mind becomes fatigued, and loses its elasticity when employed by too many subjects; it is in fact, impossible to digest more than one at a time. How much soever general knowledge may be desirable, it is to be preferred that a person be master of one science rather than a smatterer in all. We have order and regularity in the natural, why not in the moral, world? In any way in which I can assist you, I shall be happy to do so. Mrs. Leclerc authorizes me to say that she will exert her influence to promote your interest as far as possible.

I am,

My dear Madam,

Very truly, your obedient servant,

To

A. LECLERC."

The Signora Orsini.

"Mr. L. is a very excellent, but rather an enthusiastic, gentleman," observed the Signora: "do not you think, Sarah, that we shall be laughed at, if we attempt to act upon his plan?"

"Oh no, his reputation would make any absurdity palatable, but he only recommends what is right."

"Then, Sarah, we must act upon it."

"And I, Clara, imagine it will conduce to our own welfare and comfort."

CHAPTER V.

THE honour of representing his native county in Parliament was offered to Mr. L., but he declined it. I am yet, he said, full young to enter into the busy and distracting bustle of politics, nor could I devote so much of my time to their interest as my constituents might expect from me; neither would I contest an election—my fortune would be injured, and I should take my place in the House with the uneasy feeling that, through me or my agents, disturbances had been excited. I must therefore return a negative to the requisition, but I beg you will offer my grateful thanks to those gentlemen who have promised me their support.

Mrs. L. had not given her opinion upon the subject, but her son well knew that she would approve his decision. For some time, Mrs. L. had been indisposed, her son feared that she was hydropical, and persuaded her to take as much exercise as she could bear; he once proposed a walk to the Signora's, the distance was not quite three miles, and he thought she might walk so far without being

greatly fatigued. Mrs. L. assented, and they went.

It was the Midsummer vacation, and the pupils were returned to their homes : Gertrude remained, as usual. Nearly three years had passed since Mr. L. had seen her, she had been in the school-room when he called, and knew she must not quit it to speak to him. She had learned a disagreeable lesson ; and that was that between herself and Mr. L. there was a vast difference : in Wales this had not been perceptible, but in Surrey it was : his elegant residence, which she had passed with the Signora, his splendid equipage and liveried domestics, and the estimation in which he was held by the great families near them, who noticed her governesses on his account—all impressed Gertrude with high ideas of his importance. In Wales he was domesticated with them, in England his visits were few, short, and formal ; and, when Gertrude saw him depart, she again wished that they had never left Caernarvonshire.

The tea urn was just placed on the table, when Mr. L. and his mother were announced ; and, without any ceremony, he seated himself, and requested Miss Owen to give him some tea.

“ Will Mrs. L. take tea or coffee ? ” enquired Miss Emma.

“ Neither, brandy and toasted bread are what she takes, the state of her health will not allow her to trifle.”

Miss Emma was sorry to hear this, and busied herself in preparing every thing necessary for Mrs. L.'s comfort.

"Gertrude had withdrawn, with her bonnet and scarf: she returned, and took her place at the table."

Mr. L. did not recognize her; when he did, he enquired if she had improved.

"The Signora says I have, sir."

"I know, Mr. L., that you are aware how sacred music should be played; after tea, will you permit Gertrude to play some pieces she has learnt?" asked the Signora.

Mr. L. nodded; Mrs. L. said she should be much gratified, and Miss M. was placed at the piano with some of Mr. Addison's hymns before her. She played timidly at first, but Mr. Leclerc's approving smile ever encouraged, and her fingers glided softly over the keys, and her voice received the deep intonation of the music, as she sung the hymn commencing,

'When all thy mercies, oh, my God.'

"See what patience and perseverance will effect," said Mr. L.: "when I saw you in Wales, you said you could never learn, but you have executed that piece well; very well."

"Very well, indeed," said Mrs. L.; "when you call, Miss Owen, bring that young lady with you."

Gertrude rose gaily. "I shall be happy, very happy, ma'am, to play, if I could amuse you by doing so."

"If you come," said Mrs. Leclerc, "come early. Signora, are you engaged to-morrow?"

"No, Madam."

"Then come early; Arthur is going to breakfast at Windsor, and I will send you home in the evening."

The Signora was much obliged, and would do herself the honour of spending the day with her.

Mr. L. looked at his watch.

"What is the time, Arthur?"

"Half-past seven; I told Clarke to be here at seven."

"Your watch is too fast, sir," said Gertrude.

"I believe it is: oh, here he is;" and at that moment the carriage drew to the door, and Mr. and Mrs. L. departed.

Mr. L. was not fashionable in many things: he took his breakfast at eight, and his other meals at equally unfashionable hours; he left home at seven, and at eleven the Signora and her young charge paid their respects to his mother.

Gertrude was bewildered; the entrance hall was ornamented by some ancient armour, and various exotics shed their fragrance on the air; the stairs, which wound up the left side, were marble, with richly carved mahogany ballusters, and the breakfast room, in which Mrs. L. was sitting, was superbly furnished. Miss M. missed Mr. L., she was not timid when he was present, but hesitated and stammered when she tried to answer his mother. Mrs. L. perceived her confusion.

"You are bashful, and when I was a little girl I was so too; you will be more at your ease presently; take your governess's bonnet, and leave your

own in the room to the left, walk about where you like, and come in when you have recovered your confidence."

Gertrude lightly skipped up the marble stairs, and gazed around her with delight. A portrait of Mr. L., taken when he was sixteen, was placed over the mantel piece. Mr. L. was represented in a manner which expressed his amiable disposition ; he was kneeling on the grass, sheltering a rabbit with one arm, while he kept off a dog with the other. Miss M. looked at the picture for some time, and then went to the window ; it commanded a side view of the country ; and, having satisfied her curiosity, she descended and asked the footman to shew her the room where she had left the Signora and Mrs. L., who was speaking when she entered :—

"I am, as it were, dying, to avoid death ; Arthur prescribes my regimen, and will not hear of any deviation from it : he would not have gone to Windsor to-day, but to prepare a friend to receive me ; I am to take even laborious exercise, both he and Dr. ——— say that I must submit to their rules."

"I trust they will produce the effect intended, Madam, and that you will soon be entirely recovered," replied the Signora.

Mrs. L. shook her head. "I do not wish to make my son unhappy, but the complaint is hereditary, and will prove fatal. But look out some music, I was much pleased with your pupil's per-

formance, yesterday. You will find music of every description, in the next room."

The Signora and Gertrude went there, and Mrs. L. followed them. "This is Arthur's favourite apartment; the view we have of the river renders it pleasing."

It was something more like the other; it was richly furnished, the windows opened upon a lawn, diversified by beds of earth, in which every description of plant flowered luxuriantly, and at the extremity, the Thames rolled silently on, watering and giving vigour to the willows and other trees that adorned the banks. The exterior scene was reflected in the large mirrors that adorned the apartment, and, while seated at the harp, Gertrude saw the barges and boats on the river sail before her as in a sea of glass. She gave way to her gay feelings, and sang and played with ease and vivacity.

Miss M. was never so happy in her life; and, after dinner, when Mrs. L. told her to amuse herself as she liked, she glided on the lawn, and walked down to the river, the tide was ebbing, and as it receded it left the clear gravelled beach hard and dry. Gertrude seated herself on a rustic seat placed above high water mark, and entertained herself by examining some plants that grew beside her. While she remained, the gardener came to water them, and Gertrude said,—

"Do you ever have any roots stolen?"

"Sometimes, Miss."

"I thought so; the place is open, and so accessible from the river: why is there not a bank?"

"My master, Miss, says it spoils the prospect from the house; he had some palings, but they were taken down, and now we set traps and guns."

"But do not many people come here in the day time?"

"Sometimes, Miss, but very few are so rude as to attempt to trespass here; some do, but if they are decent people, my master will not suffer them to be molested, and so long as they do no hurt, they may walk as long as they please."

"That is very kind."

"Mr. L. is always kind, Miss; I have lived with him seven years, and have always found him the same; he was but eighteen when I came first, but he had more sense than than any one I ever served before. Would you like to see the kitchen garden, and orchard, Miss?"

"Oh, yes," said Gertrude; and, while she was roving about, Mrs. Leclerc and the Signora were speaking of her.

"I think that, situated as she is, with respect to family connexion, the education she is receiving is of too high an order for her," said Mrs. L.

"I have said so to Mr. Dawson, and his reply was, 'I acknowledge the truth of what you say, but is the child to be sacrificed because her grandmother and mother choose to outrage common sense? Her father's birth and profession were highly respectable, so were his relatives. I am aware that £75

per annum would not maintain Gertrude in a style commensurate with the ideas she will have acquired, but I do not intend her to pass indolently through life. When she is fourteen, I shall place her in a large establishment, with the understanding that, at the expiration of four years, she is to become a junior teacher. She will thus be employed, and the salary she will receive will be sufficient to supply her wants ; her own property will be untouched, if she marry, money will be no objection, and if she do not, in the evening of her life she will have something to afford her comfort, and to protect her from the insults of the world.' This plan, my dear Madam, has been frustrated by our removal to London, and Gertrude remains with us on rather different terms. The sum which Mr. D. allows with her is wholly inadequate to defray the expenses we are obliged to incur, that she may mix with those young ladies who have been entrusted to us, through your and Mr. Leclerc's great kindness. But she is to give us the benefit of her services when she is eighteen, and to receive no salary for three years, which will compensate us for the extra charge we are now at."

"She will excel in music, I think," said Mrs. L. ; "she has a fine voice."

"She has, ma'am ; and she has lately paid much attention to my instructions."

Mr. Leclerc met with some friends at Windsor, and did not return till ten ; the Signora and her pupil left at eight, and Gertrude did not see Mr. L.

for several months. Mrs. L. appeared much better when they returned home in May, and Gertrude went with Miss Owen to congratulate her on her improved health. Miss Manvers walked on the lawn, while Miss O. remained with Mrs. L. Mr. L. was seated on one of the garden chairs, viewing the river, which was covered with various boats. .

“ You look well, Miss Manvers. Are your governesses enjoying good health?”

Gertrude answered affirmatively, and Mr. L. directed her attention to the scene before them. The brown sails of the sailing barge, and the white ones of the pleasure boat, were equally conspicuous, and persons of all grades were passing to and fro in boats of every description.

“ Observe those jolly boats,” said Mr. L.; “ they most probably belong to some Newcastle collier, or small trading vessel, and are now instrumental in affording pleasure to those who, confined for months to the close and disagreeable neighbourhoods of Ratcliff, Wapping, and Shadwell, gladly avail themselves of the return of their relatives to enjoy the pleasures of the water, unattended by its dangers. Remark the party in the nearest boat; the elderly man who steers is probably the master; the two rowing appear to be something above common seamen, and are, possibly, mate and cabin-boy. The awning shelters them from the sun, and its stanchions serve as a support to the pale, delicate girl whose attenuated hand rests on the arm of the younger one. Excursions like these are most likely

recommended as a cure to incipient consumption. She is, perhaps, one of those whose health has been sacrificed in fruitless endeavours to provide for herself by needle-work. The years of her childhood, that ought to have been spent in gay and innocent amusements, may have been devoted to learning a life-destroying business, and her parents reap the reward of their inhumanity in her total incapability to discharge the duties of life. The beautiful girls by her side are certainly not her relatives; they are, perhaps, the daughters of the veteran seaman; and may have solicited their father to afford their friends all the benefit in his power to confer. The rowers are resting on their oars, and seem to be admiring the house. They may envy its owner, and so show the absurdity of all things; for, could they know circumstances and read thoughts, they would learn that its possessor has many, very many, distressing occurrences to render him unhappy. Every station in life has its pains; the highest is exposed to vicissitude and sorrow; the lowest has its miseries, and, like others, it has, too, its pleasures."

Mr. L. ceased speaking, and sunk into a state of abstraction, which was becoming almost habitual. Gertrude was convinced that Mr. Leclerc was greatly altered since his return from the Continent. He was so. The scenes he had witnessed were not calculated to raise his spirits. He saw countries, generally vicious, still further demoralized, under the pretence of reformation; and, while he viewed Rome, the fallen empress of the world, he was

compelled mentally to own that the present Ruler of the Adriatic was pursuing the same course that had brought his predecessors to destruction. Mr. L. saw, too, the wives, the daughters, and every female relative of the fallen and imprisoned chiefs of Italy, the slaves of the proud and inhuman victors, earning, by their own infamy, a miserable subsistence in the land and possessions of their forefathers. The Papal states, the other divisions of Italy, Spain, Germany, and Holland, bore witness to the morality, the pureness, of their regenerators! The havoc in the Swiss cantons, so lately the abodes of peace and innocence, was altogether too dreadful to contemplate; and, sick at heart, disgusted at all he saw and heard, Mr. L. revisited his own country with changed ideas and saddened spirits. His mother's illness had disturbed his mind, and, now that she was partially restored to health, his thoughts roamed over the world, and he was hourly framing schemes to reform it. Vain attempt! Not that it is wrong to do so; every one ought to lend his aid to any thing that may appear to promote the moral welfare of his fellow men; but it is folly to expect unalloyed success. It is useless to grieve at disappointment; yet the man of sensibility and refinement will ever regret the vitiated state of society, and deplore the evils he cannot cure.

Gertrude regarded Mr. L.'s silence as an intimation that he did not wish to be intruded upon, and returned to the house. She was perfectly at ease, and she was happy, while at the villa, in the com-

pany of Mrs. and Mr. L.; and, when she returned to her lessons, it was with gaiety and pleasure, that she might qualify herself to deserve their favour.

Mr. Dawson came so see her on her birth-day. Her watch was still in order, and, as a proof of his approbation of her conduct, her guardian presented her with 'The Emigrants,' a poem, by Mrs. Charlotte Smith, and some other poetical compositions by the same beautiful writer. Mr. Dawson did not appear well; his health had been for some time unstable, and, as much to benefit it, as to execute the orders of his employers, he was about to visit Cornwall, and several other counties of England.

"You will not see me for several months, Gertrude. Let me, when I return, receive the same favourable account of your proficiency as I have now."

Time passed on, and Miss M. became generally admired: extremely lovely in her person, and captivating in her manners, she had many friends, and more enemies, and her conduct was not calculated to diminish the number of the latter. Gertrude was proud; proud of her person and acquirements, proud of her religious observances. At church on a Sunday, and in the daily prayers of the week, her elevated brow seemed to say, 'You do not equal me;' the glance of scorn shot frequently from her eye, and the sarcastic smile of contempt curled her lip. Even Mr. Leclerc did not escape her criticism; and she sometimes replied to his observations in a

way which exceedingly displeased him. Rapidly approaching sixteen, Miss M. thought she had a right to think and act for herself; and she, one evening, condemned a gentleman in no measured terms. Mr. L. paid the respect due to talent, but he could not forget that he had known Gertrude a child, and a very ignorant one too; and, with some severity, he said,

"It is impossible for any one to tell the power of temptation, but the being that is exposed to it."

"Oh, but Mr. — is a religious man."

"Well; he is human, and, as such, liable to err: a life of continued profligacy proves a man a vicious character; occasional errors say that he is weak, they do not speak him wicked. 'He who judges with severity of others endangers his own virtue.'"

Gertrude blushed, and was silent; the great duty of religious charity had never been implanted in her breast. She disliked her governesses, certainly not without reason; and her antipathy to them made every thing they recommended disagreeable to her. 'Example strikes where precept fails,' is a hackneyed, but true, line. Unfortunately for her, Gertrude had precept, not example. Of all she knew, Mrs. and Mr. L. were the only persons who appeared to reduce theory to practice, and of them she saw too little to learn much of those unobtrusive, but real, virtues, the absence of which causes much of human misery. She was much attached to Mr. Leclerc, and she frequently contradicted him, that

she might attract his attention ; for even his anger was more pleasant to her than his silence. Mr. L. never saw a fault without gently re^{pro}ving it, and Gertrude built her moral virtues upon the instructions he casually gave her. But she admitted pride and its concomitant, impatience, and spoiled them all.

Miss Manvers had not heard of her guardian for some months, and she was rather uneasy at his long silence. Her suspense was soon disagreeably terminated. Mr. D. had been attacked by apoplexy, and, after lingering for some time, he had relapsed, and was no more.

By his will, which he had made when he first became her guardian, he left Miss M. £200, and consigned her to the care of William Walters Milsom, Esq., an eminent merchant, and one who was generally thought an honourable man. Whatever else he might be, he was too proud a man to be troubled with the concerns of an orphan girl, whose whole fortune did not amount to £2000 ; and when Mr. Lumley waited upon him, to complain of the hardship of Gertrude's being taken from her mother's care, Mr. Milsom very readily offered to resign Gertrude's affairs to him, and to transfer to him the money which stood in the name of Mr. Dawson, as trustee for Miss Manvers.

Mr. Lumley as gladly availed himself of the offer ; and, before Gertrude knew of Mr. D.'s death, her mother and Mr. Lumley were invested with absolute power to do as they pleased. Mrs. Lumley had often complained, to those who would listen to

her, that her daughter was being brought up a fine lady, while she was at home slaving and drudging from morning till night.

"Now," said Mrs. Lumley, "the hussy shall know what work is: she has had a fine time of it—seven years spent in idleness, with them fine outlandish ladies. Well, we'll see, now—either they shall keep her without the money, or she shall come home and learn how to work. Madam shan't eat her bread in laziness any more. I shall pay 'em a visit and rub 'em up."

The Signora's school was so flourishing that she was enabled to have the house enlarged, and to keep two additional servants. One, who had just come, and who thought Miss Manvers the loveliest girl she had ever seen, opened the door to her mother, and, with some surprise, informed Miss Owen that a strange looking woman wanted to see her and Miss M.; both went into the kitchen, where the servant had introduced the visitor; she was dressed in a rusty black cloth dress, which was all pieces, as she had made it up out of cast-off clothes of her husband, who always wore black, that he might be thought something above the common; she had one boot and one shoe; a blue silk bonnet which she had bought for a shilling; and a scarf torn and dirty, her hair was uncombed, and her face not washed; combs and soap she said were things too dear to waste. Gertrude was attired in a light brown silk dress, her hair was fastened back with silver combs, and her chain adorned her beautiful

neck: a greater contrast could not have been presented than existed between the mother and daughter.

"Pray," said Gertrude, who did not recognize her, "pray what may be your business with me?"

"I have come to take you home, Miss, you have had schooling enough; and now Mr. Dawson is dead."

Gertrude screamed loudly, and fell senseless on the floor.

"This comes of boarding-schools, and your fine education," exclaimed Mrs. Lumley. Miss Owen was bewildered, but, recovering herself, she opened the hall door, and gave Mrs. Lumley 1s. 6d. "Be kind enough to enquire for Dr. Sivarelli, and send him here."

Miss O. guessed who Mrs. L. was, and well knew money was a powerful director. Dr. Sivarelli, an Italian physician, was dead many years before they left Italy, and Miss O. thought she would not give herself much trouble to seek him. She was right, Mrs. Lumley found that no such person as Dr. S. was ever known, and went home, that she might not be asked to return the money. It was sometime before Gertrude recovered. Miss O. and her sisters were greatly irritated, and Miss M. had to listen to their comments upon her mother's appearance, and Mr. D.'s death, which was still a mystery to them. Mr. Lumley cleared it up; he was still a respectable looking man, and could behave well when he liked: he came to inform the ladies that Miss M. was now under his care, and

that he felt it his duty to see she received instruction in useful branches of knowledge: for which purpose she must reside with her mother.

Gertrude earnestly entreated the Signora to allow her to remain; she promised to do anything they wished, if they would but permit her to stay with them. The Signora listened to her half frantic pleadings with her usual imperturbable frigidity: she kissed Gertude's forehead and said, "I shall be sorry to part with you, Gertrude, but we could not afford to retain you with us: and another thing is, your mother might come, and that would be destruction. You can come and see me when you like." Miss M. turned away indignantly. "I must submit then to my fate," she mentally murmured: "but my mother is deceived if she expects I will become her slave."

Mrs. Lumley resided in a village near London, she had a ten-roomed house, and only kept two to herself. Gertrude expected to see a miserable abode, and she was not deceived. The top back attic and a kitchen were the rooms which Mrs. L. kept: in the latter she then was, and Gertrude's heart revolted at the spectacle; she was eating potatoes and herring, and the room was as dirty as herself. She addressed Gertrude in her usual style of invective, and pushed her own plate towards her.

Miss M. neither would, nor could, eat. and she turned to Mr. Lumley, saying,

"What room is to be appropriated to my use, sir?"

"Why, Gertrude, really, I—Rosine, where is your daughter to sleep?"

"She must sleep down here, here is the bedstead, and she pointed to an old servant's one which she had bought for a few shillings.

Miss M.'s trunks had been sent the day before, and were placed, one upon the other, at the end of the kitchen: she had been looking at her mother, and, with a glance of scorn, she opened the door, and walked up stairs.

The dining-room door was open, and Miss M. walked in, and threw herself upon a chair. To her surprise the room was well furnished, and very clean.

While she was attentively viewing it, a pale, but pretty, girl, about five years old, ran into the room, and stopped when she saw Miss M.

"Come," said Gertrude, "what is your name?"

"Mary Lumley, Miss," and the child curtsied.

Gertrude's cheeks flushed with passion — this must be a child of her mother's, and there might be more, and she was to look after them.—So I will.

"Tell me, who is your mother?"

"Mrs. Lumley, Miss."

"And who lives in this house?"

"Why, Mrs. Perkins lives in the two rooms at the top of the house; and Mr. Ellison has this dining and the drawing room, and a bed room; and the two parlours are let to a friend of my father's, and a woman as takes in washing lives in the kitchen, and she works for the lodgers."

"What do you do?"

"I? I waits upon 'em as well as I can, and fetches what arrants they want."

Gertrude's thoughts reverted to her own childhood, her heart was softened, she caught the child in her arms, and wept bitterly. Mary looked surprized and half frightened, and struggled to free herself.

"Let me go, let me go, Lieutenant Ellison will be here directly, and won't suffer me in his rooms; and, while the child was speaking, a gay and fine looking young man entered, whistling,

"Over the hills and far away."

He stopped when he saw Miss M.

"I did not expect to be favoured with a lady's company."

"I beg pardon for intruding, sir, but I did not know by whom these rooms were occupied:" and Miss M. regarded the gentleman with astonishment. She was surprized that so fashionable and elegant a man should, for an instant, reside with her mother.

Lieutenant Ellison was no less surprized. Gertrude was turned sixteen, and her height made her appear older, the pride of her disposition influenced her person, and a certain haughtiness of manner indicated great self sufficiency. He imagined she must be a visitor to some of the other inmates; and requested to know if he could give her any information of any one she wished to see.

"No sir. Until I spoke to this little girl, I

was not aware that this was a lodging-house, or that all the rooms were occupied. I intruded ignorantly. I am the daughter of Mrs. Lumley; and, as she was resolved I should leave the ladies with whom my deceased guardian placed me, I thought she would have some room ready for me."

"At any time, Miss, this room is at your service. I am seldom here long together, and should be happy to accommodate you. I did not know that Mrs. Lumley had such a daughter. Little Mary never mentioned a sister."

Again Gertrude's face flushed.

"I never saw the child before this hour. I am her mother's daughter by her first husband, Major Manvers."

Miss M. rose, as she spoke, and bade Lieutenant Ellison good afternoon.

"Perhaps," she said, to Mary, "you will show me your bed room."

Mary led her to the top of the house, and opened the door of a dirty and badly-furnished room. Gertrude seated herself on the bed.

"Does your mother ever have a servant?"

"No," said Mary, "she and I do the work, she cleans the furniture, and beats the carpets, and all that, and I clean the knives and Lieutenant Ellison's boots and Mr. Perkin's shoes, and I fetch all the arrants."

"Where is your father?"

"Father's seldom at home."

"No! I should imagine not," said Gertrude

bitterly: "no man could endure such a life, and what does she save by it? She lives a picture of human misery, while her husband spends abroad double the money which, were there any order or propriety, would render them comfortable at home. Mary, where does your grandmother, Mrs. Jones, live?"

"Oh, not far."

"I will give you a shilling if you will show me where."

The child went with her. Miss M. had not seen her grandmother for eight years, but she recognized her immediately. A relation had left Mrs. Jones £300; this money she had not quite exhausted: she had only two rooms, but they were elegantly furnished, and she was herself splendidly dressed. A very rich black satin dress, and jet ornaments, adorned her person, and her mourning cap was of the finest white crape. She had two servants, one was reading to her, the other was shelling peas, which were purchased at three shillings the peck.

"Lord, Mary, what's brought you, what a figure you are, child; lauk, what lady have you brought with you?"

"I know you," said Gertrude: "I am your granddaughter and god-child, Gertrude."

"Lauk, how well you look: why you are quite a lady; lauk, I suppose you are glad to get out of the way of your wretch of a mother: sit down, Mary, child. Gertrude, my dear, sit down, you have just come in time, we shall have a nice dinner.

Harriet, take this young lady's bonnet and pelisse, and bring her a glass of wine, and some cake; bring me some cloves, my spirits are low this morning, Lauk, what a wretch your mother is; how she does go on, to be sure! I have been told such tales of her: why she's got a whole parcel of people in the house, and a Navy Officer, and all sorts of folks; lau, she's enough to drive one mad. And Lumley drinks like a fish: she may save till she's sick, but I don't blame the man, there's never a place fit for a pig. I wonder how she gets lodgers: lau, Gertrude, what a great gal you are, you'll be getting married soon, I suppose."

What wonder that the cultivated, the elegant, Gertrude Manvers should turn with disgust from both her relatives!

"Who," she said, "are these young women?"

"My sarvants. Lauk, Mary, I dare say you are hungry. Jane, give the child a piece of bread and butter; there, now go home, Mary, and if your wretch of a mother asks about my granddaughter, tell her she is here. You can stop with me, my dear, your mother has got no place fit for you; Harriet will sleep with Jane on the floor, and you must sleep with me."

"I cannot return to Mrs. Lumley," said Gertrude. "until she has some apartment vacant; I meant to go to my uncle's, if I could not have found you."

"Oh, your uncle is dead, he died a fortnight ago."

Miss M. felt little affection for him, and she said, "I did not know that."

"How was you to know? do you think your mother would go in mourning—Not she indeed, why she didn't when her own child died."

"How many children has she by this Mr. Lumley?"

"She's had three. Mary is the only one that lives, and that Mr. Ellison says she wont die to please 'em, and I think not. Lauk, the child must have nine lives, or she'd have been dead long ago."

"Who is Mr. Ellison?"

"Lauk, he's some wonderous great man, he's been living there three months. I can't think how he likes it, but he don't let your mother cook for him; the woman what lives in the front kitchen is a decent, tidy woman, and she cooks and washes for him."

"High ho," said Gertrude, "I have a pleasant prospect before me."

"Do as I do, gal, don't mind her, your mother's half cracked at times."

"Has she ever been deranged since I left her?" enquired Miss M.

"Deranged, oh, mad: you mean: no, but is she ever in her senses? Here Jane, Harriet, what are you about?"

When the girls came, Miss M. had leisure to observe them: the one was attired in black silk, the other bombazine, and Gertrude could not help saying,

"I think you should have given Mary Lumley a decent frock, instead of buying such expensive mourning for your servants."

"I did give her one: I paid 3s. 6d. a yard for the bombazine, but your mother said so much money should not be laying by, or be worn in waste, and she pledged it for 15s., and lent the money to a woman who is to pay her interest for it."

Gertrude clasped her hands.

"Was there ever such an unhappy woman, oh, miserable does she make herself and others!"

"Lauk, what's the use of fretting? drink this wine, it ought to be good, for I paid 6s. 6d. a bottle for it."

But it was not good, and Gertrude left it untouched. Her thoughts were sufficient food for her. Mr. Leclerc, what would he think, could he see her relatives, and how would their crimes (it is not too harsh a word, for such absurdities lead to crime,) afford employment to his satirical pen! It has been said that satire betokens a weak or an envious mind. I beg leave to dissent from this opinion; in Mr. Leclerc it was certainly neither. Blest with general good health, every personal grace, and with talents seldom found united with such accomplishments; universally esteemed, the ornament of a Court, the shining star of private life; of whom could Mr. Leclerc have been envious, even had not Christianity, pure, real, and rational, forbidden the debasing passion? That he did not possess a weak mind was self evident, yet

Mr. L. was satirical, and bitterly so, but then he satirized vice and folly. Harmless eccentricity, he was accustomed to remark, ought to be suffered to pass unnoticed, but deviations from virtue and propriety should be ever reprobated. Upon a mind like Gertrude's, Mr. L. was sure to create an indelible impression; she was disgusted with what passed before her; and Mr. L.'s high-toned and entirely mental observations were calculated to increase the feelings of abhorrence with which she regarded all around her.

"Lauk, Gertrude, why don't you eat? why you have not touched your peas, and here is a nice piece of lamb."

"No, thank you, I cannot eat any thing. I will go upstairs and lay down, for my head aches dreadfully."

Miss M. staid three days with her grandmother, and was completely tired of her extravagance and improvidence.

Mrs. Jones did not drink to excess, yet she consumed a great deal of liquor; and, as economy was with her regarded as meanness, she was profuse and wasteful to an extreme. Gertrude saw the girl give to a cat the peas which had been taken from table, and could not help exclaiming—

"Shameful! how can you expect a blessing from Heaven, if you so destroy the food which God sends you in His mercy!"

"O, my missis never has anything cold brought to table again."

"Then, why not give it away?"

"Why, Miss, some years ago, I was a scullery maid at —— hall,* and there we had lots of provision, many and many a good leg of mutton and fine piece of beef have I put into the pig tub; we had too much victuals; well, when I left there, I went to live with another great man, and there I took it into my head to give the victuals away. Well, master finds it out, and I was taken afore a magistrate on a charge of robbing him. I got out of the scrape, but I thought I would'nt get into another, and I does as I'm told."

Gertrude turned away.

"Were my motherless avaricious, and my grandmother more careful, how happy they might always have been! we might have lived together and been very, very happy. But it was not to be.

'The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices,
Make rods to scourge us.' "

Mr. Lumley came to persuade Gertrude to return home.

"I will not," said Gertrude, "unless I have an apartment to myself; let me have one respectably furnished room to myself, and I will occupy it. I am going now to see the Signora, and shall stop a day or two."

Had the Signora been the only person in Surrey, she would never have seen Gertrude: but Miss M.

* The noble proprietor has now mortgaged his estates: can it be wondered at?

wished to see and hear of the L.'s. Mr. Lumley promised to give some of his lodgers notice to quit ; and Gertrude visited her late governesses. She was well received, and when she asked after Mrs. and Mr. L., Miss Owen told her that Mrs. L. was very ill, and that Mr. L. had been in the country some time, and returned very hastily with an eminent physician. Miss M. was greatly hurt, and with miserable feelings she returned to her mother's residence. She was much surprised to find the house empty, and went to her grandmother's to learn the cause.

"Lauk, child, why don't you know your mother's tricks afore to day? Lauk, she never stops long in a place; though, this time it was about you, that Lumley said you should have a room, and then she found out that lodgers were a great fatigue, so she sent her lodgers away, and has took a house with six rooms in it. One room 's for you, one for herself, and two for Lieutenant Ellison, who has gone with her, and one kitchen's for the woman, and the other 's for yourselves to live in."

Gertrude found the house neat and clean, and, for a wonder, her mother was well dressed, and so was Mary; and Miss M. took her tea with some comfort. But the sunshine was of short duration; an aunt of Major Manvers had left Gertrude a fine harp, this she did not see, and she asked where it was.

"Where is it? where do you think? do you suppose I was going to let good money lay by? no,

no, I'll take care of what I have, I was offered £40 for it, so I took it; what do you want with a harp? your fingers must be better employed; I can't afford to keep you a dressed-up doll. Get some shirts to make, or stays to stitch, or something to do: you shan't pass your time in idleness."

"Now, see at your economy," said Gertrude: "you would wish me to earn a few shillings at an employment for which any one is capable, yet you deny me the sum requisite to finish my education, when I could provide for myself: but I have no right to do so, my father's property"—

Mrs. L. struck her daughter. "You shall not touch a penny of it, you hussy, till I can't help it, and if you don't work, you shan't eat. Mary and I make caps, and if you do not assist us, you shall not have neither clothes, money, nor victuals."

"That is, if you can hinder me," said Gertrude. "I will do no needlework."

Mrs. Lumley threw a cup of tea at Miss M.

"This is economy, to waste the tea," said Gertrude, drying her face. "but, if you are determined that I shall stop with you, I will not degrade myself by a compliance with your folly."

"Gertrude, how dare you talk to your mother in this manner!" said Mr. Lumley.

"Mr. L., you had better attend to your own affairs, keep yourself sober, sir, and then your wife and daughter need not be hands to any firm."

Miss M. spoke with great contempt, and rose. The little room appropriated to her was decently

furnished, and Mary told her she was to sleep with her. Mary was a pretty, mild girl, and Gertrude felt inclined to like her. Her frocks were in the same state as her own had once been, and, to amuse her mind, Miss M. selected some of the worst of her own to alter for her. A green silk dress was soon ready for her: Gertrude curled her hair and dressed her.

"Oh, how pretty I look," said Mary; "may I call you sister, kind lady?"

"Oh, no, no, Mary; your father's child can never be my sister; call me Gertrude, but not sister."

Tears stood in the clear eyes of Miss Lumley, but she said nothing, and Gertrude, taking her in her arms, went down stairs.

"How does your daughter look, sir?" said Miss M., when Mary jumped towards him.

"Look? as she ought to look. Rosine, you must let Gertrude alone."

This remark attracted his wife's anger, and, to escape her abuse, he sauntered to the public house, and, in copious draughts of brandy and water, drowned the remembrance of home and its disagreeables.

CHAPTER VI.

THE more Gertrude saw of her mother the more she was disgusted with her, and bitterly did she regret the loss which had placed her in her power. In Mr. Dawson, Gertrude had not only lost an affectionate friend, but she had lost the only person who was inclined to become the protector of her youth and innocence. Mr. Lumley was going his winter journey, through the West of England, and Mrs. Jones declared she should spend the winter with her daughter-in-law in London, and enjoy its gaieties. The winter was a miserable one to Gertrude. Her mother, finding her positive in her determination of not working with her and Mary, insisted that she should take the latter's place in waiting upon Mr. Ellison. In consenting to this, Gertrude was certainly wrong, as she appeared to court an intimacy with one whom every female that valued her character assiduously shunned. That, to a talented female, and Gertrude was one, constant employment at the needle might be tedious, would be ready acknowledged: but, in her situ-

ation, it would have been better for her to have submitted to any inconvenience than to have placed herself in the way of one disposed to take every advantage of her misfortune in possessing such a parent as Mrs. Lumley.

Westropp Ellison was a melancholy instance of the effects of unlimited self-indulgence. His father had intended him for the church: at the age of seventeen he was sent to college, to add one more to the number that had disgraced its walls. Living at home surrounded by every luxury, and totally unacquainted with religion, it was not likely he would become an exemplary character at an establishment where, as in all, the good are mingled with the vicious, and the profligate are ever on the watch to add to their number. His mother was much too fine a lady to attend to so unimportant a subject as the education of her children; and the Hon. Francis Ellison thought he fulfilled his duty, when he consigned them to the care of a tutor, and saw them supplied with every elegance of life. Westropp had no remembrance of early piety, he had no love of virtue. To guard him against the snares of a collegiate life, he became first a learner in, and then a teacher of, the ways of vice! It was in vain that his tutor, and after him the higher authorities of his college, reproved and punished him: his dissipation spurned correction, and he stopped short only of crimes that were visited with expulsion. I, he said, like the life very well; my father may keep me here as long as he likes.

in my room I am my own master ; in Bruton-street I must obey Mamma, and attend her to the Opera with some insipid misses who are startled and shocked at my want of gallantry, if I wish to leave them. Repentance is all very fine : when I am settled in some country parish, with £600 or 700 a year, and an incorrigible congregation, I will preach penitence and—turn penitent myself. But at present I mean to enjoy myself. In his way he did so, but in his serious moments he did not approve his conduct, and he shrunk from declaring that he was called by the Spirit of God to a profession which he detested. The deaths of his father and brother left him free to follow his own inclination, and he, for some time, hesitated between a military or a naval life. A red coat, he observed, was far more becoming than a blue one ; but then there is so much subordination in the Navy, an officer there is an officer indeed, and there is variety, too, without the plagues of a military life. Soldiers at sea are as much out of place as women in a field of battle. And military men must go to sea ; so, all things considered, I'll be a sailor at once : and he commenced his naval career as a midshipman. Although a great favourite with the dissipated part of the officers, he was disliked by the sensible ones, and cordially hated by the subordinates and men.

“He ‘tops the officer’ over all,” said the boatswain, coolly, “but his pride will have a fall.” It had. A charge was preferred against him by the second lieutenant, and, after a patient investigation

the decision of the Court was, 'That fourth Lieutenant Westropp Ellison had been guilty of insubordination, and of highly unofficer-like and ungentlemanly conduct, in disobeying his superior officer, and in using bad language towards him ; such conduct being subversive of all discipline, and tending to the discredit of His Majesty's service; and the sentence of the Court was, that Lieutenant Westropp Ellison be suspended for twelve months.'

Mr. Ellison heard this with dismay ; and, not caring to meet any of his gay associates, he sought country lodgings. The bill of Mrs. Lumley was the first that caught his eye, and he engaged her rooms. When the first feelings of passion and shame subsided, he began to notice the inconveniences of his situation, but the faults of his landlady furnished him with an inexhaustible fund of amusement ; and he frequently gathered his frivolous companions around him to laugh at her absurdities. He was thinking of removing, when Gertrude was compelled to reside with her mother, and, thinking her a beautiful girl, he determined to make that beautiful girl his own. But Gertrude was proud, and would not her pride revolt at a life of disgrace ? " No matter, we'll see," said Lieutenant Ellison, as he rang his bell. * Mary answered it—and then he did not want anything.

Mr. Dawson had always supplied Miss M. liberally with money, she had some unspent when she left the Signora, and, on counting it over, found she had sufficient to defray the expense of a journey to

Richmond, and, as it was the Christmas vacation, she thought her presence would not be disagreeable. The time seemed long at her mother's, the few books there were in the house were read and re-read, and she found herself forgetting what she had learned for want of practice. As Gertrude did not ask her mother for money, Mrs. Lumley had no objection, indeed she approved her going to the Signora.

"I shall," she said, "save your victuals while you are gone."

Miss M.'s cheeks were crimson while her mother spoke, and she sighed deeply while she dressed herself for her excursion. The Signora and Miss Emma were spending the holidays with some of their pupils, in St. James's-square, and Miss Owen remained at home.

"How is Mrs. Leclerc?" enquired Gertrude.

"Rather better than she was a month ago, but Mr. Leclerc looks very ill; on account of her health they have no company, but I dare say, Gertrude, if we were to go it would not be thought an intrusion."

"Oh, no, I dare say not: will you go to-morrow, Miss?"

"Yes: but practise, Gertrude; you do not play so well as you did."

"How should I?" said Miss M., reproachfully. "I have had no opportunity of touching any instrument for nearly six months."

Miss O. returned no answer; the truth was, the

sisters were not improved by prosperity: from despising Gertrude as an ignorant child, they began to dread her as a rival. She had excited so much notice, and possessed so much real talent, that the sisters saw it was far from improbable that, conscious of her own superiority, and owing them no gratitude, Miss M. might act independently of them, and employ her money in a separate undertaking. And, acting upon these mean and selfish considerations, they abandoned her to her mother, and rejoiced that they were delivered from a dangerous competitor! Mrs. L. had enquired for Gertrude, and Mr. L. was displeased that he did not see her.

“I request,” he said, with some asperity, “that Miss Manvers may be sent here, when she calls upon you;” and the Signora and her sisters knew their own interest too well to thwart him. To him, not to her kindness, was Miss M. indebted for Miss O.’s proposal. Gertrude was not aware of the real nature of her attachment to Mr. L., but she could not see him without great emotion, and Mr. L. attributed it to her regret at witnessing the great alteration which had taken place in his mother’s health. If there be any disease which, more than another, shews the utter vanity and folly of human pride, it is the dropsy. The last operation that gives relief, that of tapping, had been cheerfully submitted to by Mrs. L.; but the water accumulated so fast that a repetition of the operation every fortnight was necessary; and, when Gertrude saw her, she

was unable to leave the sofa, on which she was sitting. Mr. Leclerc was very pale, and his voice faltered when he spoke of his mother. Gertrude was in no mood to play or sing, but the instrument was placed before her, and she played such pieces as Mr. L. selected.

"You have not improved, lately," said Mr. L.: "where do you reside now?"

Gertrude's voice failed when she attempted to answer him; her fatal pride would not allow her to confess that she resided in an obscure village, or to give him any intimation that might lead to a knowledge of the misconduct of her relatives. She did Mr. L. great injustice, in supposing that he would treat her with contempt, on their account. Such was not his disposition: on the contrary, had Gertrude candidly related her situation, she would have met with additional kindness from him, and with protection from his mother.

To conceal their own meanness, the Signora and her sisters had intimated that it was some misconduct on her part, which caused them to part with Gertrude, and Mr. L. felt half inclined to believe it when he saw Gertrude's agitation, and the eagerness with which she answered his mother, to evade his question. He was a stranger to her history, or the pride which he had remarked and condemned would have furnished him with a clue to her conduct: he turned away, and entered into conversation with Miss Owen, nor did he again ask where she lived.

Mrs. Leclerc, having heard a sketch of Mrs. Lumley's character from the Signora, felt more than ever inclined to pity her daughter ; and, when Mr. L. left the room, she asked Gertrude if she would spend a few days with her. "Indispensable business will take Arthur's attention for some days ; I should esteem it a favour if you could make it convenient to pass a fortnight, or longer, with me." Gertrude gladly assented, and told Mrs. Leclerc that she would come on the following Monday, as that was Wednesday.

Miss M. returned home to assort her clothes, and, having packed such as she required, she asked her mother for some silver to defray the expense of sending them to Richmond.

"Work for money, if you want it."

Miss M. started.

"You will not refuse me some now, surely, when I am going to such great people."

"Let your great people keep you ; not a farthing shall you have ; work for money, as I have done before you—do not ask me for a halfpenny."

"Give me some paper, then ; let me write an excuse."

"All to pull the money out of my pocket ; no, no ; what I have I'll keep." And, to prevent her daughter's leaving the house, Mrs. Lumley locked her in her bed-room.

Gertrude's bitter tears were her sole food during the day, nor was her door unlocked until Lieutenant E. returned. Mrs. L. then unfastened her door.

"Go down, and do something; to be sure you must be too high to take the money Mr. E. offered you for getting him a newspaper, but you'll come to me!"

What was Gertrude to think of a parent, who purposely threw her into the way of a dissipated libertine, and reproached her if she did not take the presents he offered her? Mrs. L. had several times asked Mr. Ellison for needlework, and hinted that she should expect him to pay Gertrude for any thing extra she might do for him. Lieutenant E. was not backward in offering his money, but Gertrude quickly silenced him, and he then pleaded intoxication as an excuse for his improper conduct. Miss M. forgot this when she ran down stairs, and exclaimed:

"Mr. Ellison, will you lend me a pen and ink?"

"Yes, Gertrude, but you must pay me for them."

His manner, more than his words, offended her, and Miss M. left the room, nor did she answer his bell. In the morning he accosted her:

"I am afraid I offended you last evening, Miss M.; you should not mind what I say; I had been drinking claret with Ensign Bowyer, and I know I was not in a fit state to address a lady. Will you allow me to furnish you with what you required?"

"No, sir," said Gertrude indifferently; "I do not require them now."

Gertrude went to her grandmother's. Mrs. Jones had quarrelled with her daughter-in-law, and, when that was the case, she came home directly.

"Lauk, Gertrude, why I havn't seed you for an age. You do'nt look so well; lau, how should you? I suppose your mother worries your life out. But I say, Gertrude, how is it you stick on hands so? I thought you'd have been married long ago. Lauk, gal, get out of your mother's clutches as soon as you can."

Until husbands and marriages were mentioned to Miss M., she had been ignorant of her real feelings towards Mr. Leclerc. The idea of marrying any of the persons her mother and grandmother encouraged to torment her, unveiled the affection which was, before, unknown to herself.

"A wife," said Gertrude. "Ah, how happy would be the wife of Mr. Leclerc! But who will be that wife? Not I;" and Gertrude started as she spoke. "Why, for a moment, should I think of such a thing? Ah, foolish girl that I am, I now know why the idea of his marrying always shocked me. Well, may you be happy! but as for me—wretched I must always be."

If any thing could have made her more so, it would have been her grandmother's remarks, and her advice to marry as soon as she could.

"There, Gertrude, lau, gal, you don't mind me; there's young Philips, the shoemaker; he's a tidy young man, and I know, Gertrude, you might have him, if you would give him any encouragement; and there's Morris the mealman—"

"For goodness' sake, madam, believe me capable of choosing for myself. I wonder you should name

such things to a girl not seventeen. 'Were I six or seven and twenty, there might be some excuse made for you. I came to write a letter, not to be entertained by accounts of mealmen and shoemakers.'

Mrs. Jones always styled Gertrude her lady grand-daughter, and, as she stood in some awe of her, she allowed her to write in peace, and amused herself by cutting some cambric handkerchiefs into ornaments, to attract the flies, when they should make their appearance in the spring months. Gertrude wrote to Mrs. L., saying that family occurrences would prevent her having the pleasure of performing her promise. Miss Manvers hesitated—why should she not tell the truth? O had she done so, how much misery would she have been spared! but her natural haughtiness prevailed, and she sent her letter, which left Mrs. L. quite unacquainted with her real motives.

Mr. Ellison took in the papers, he left them on his table, and, when he was from home, Gertrude read them. Among the advertisements her eyes rested on the following:

'At Richmond, on February 27, of dropsy, Augusta, relict of the late Arthur Leclerc, Esq., R.N. She bore her acute sufferings with that patience which christianity only can inspire, and in her the afflicted have lost an unwearied consoler, society is deprived of one of its brightest ornaments, and her son of the best and most exemplary of parents.'

Gertrude did not weep : when greatly affected she could not, but her heart was touched, and for weeks she scarcely spoke to any one. She was altering some of her dresses, when Mary ran into the room exclaiming :

"Oh, Gertrude, my grandmother is taken to prison !"

"What," said Miss M., throwing down her work.

"Oh, her landlord has seized all her things, for the rent she owes ; and her butcher has 'rested her for £20."

"What more, Mary !"

"Nothing, isn't it quite bad enough?"

"Yes," sighed her sister, "but it is only what I expected."

When Mrs. Jones was released, she applied to her children for assistance, it was refused. Mrs. Jones, a fashionable city matron, could not spare any superfluity to assist her mother-in-law, and Mrs. Lumley would not give her any relief. Her next abode was the parish poor-house—and Gertrude became the mark for calumny and abuse. "Look at Madam," the envious neighbours would exclaim, "see how smart she is, and her Grandmother's in the workhouse, and her mother's that old beggar woman like, her as lives up the street. I say, does the Cappen that lives at your house give you these fine dresses?" Every bad passion was called into existence by these and similar attacks. Gertrude's small stock of patience was entirely exhausted, and for weeks she never left her house. She lost her

colour, her appetite failed, and her temper became soured and revengeful.

Mr. L. was never at home one month out of twelve: he returned in March, after an absence of nearly five months. Gertrude requested some money. Mr. L. gave her £5, and of this Gertrude gave her grandmother £2.

Mr. Ellison's time of suspension was expired, and an order from the Board of Admiralty commanded him to join his ship. He prepared to do so rather reluctantly. Gertrude was glad he was going, his behaviour had been for some time so marked, and his insults so many, that she looked forward to his departure with pleasure, as relieving her of one source of disquiet. He left several books behind him, and, as Mrs. L. wished to let the rooms which he had occupied, she did not disturb them. To escape her mother's constant anger, Miss M. shut herself up in the sitting room, and read the pernicious books Lieutenant Ellison had left.

His father was in France, during the reign of Atheism, and brought some of the impious works of the French philosophers with him to England. Those, and some of the earlier works of Voltaire, had found their way into the hands of his son, and had furnished him with excuses for many errors. Gertrude was confounded when she read arguments against points she had ever considered unquestionable, and her mind became tainted with scepticism, while she pondered on assertions which the

preface to one volume informed her had never been confuted. The evil that men do lives after them. Who can tell the mischief which one bad book may produce? Personal influence is little, compared with the circulation of books: they find their way into the palace and the cottage, the learned and the ignorant meet with them, and they exercise a powerful, because undreaded, effect on the mind. Gertrude would have shrunk from conversing with Lieut. E., on any such subjects, yet she read the books to wile away her cheerless hours, and she confessed she was startled at their contents. Was it possible that this world made itself—did the heavens and the stars revolve by the mere laws of matter—and was life only organization? Did events happen by chance, and was there no supreme directing Cause? The great men of their day, the master spirits of the age, said there was not, and they pointed to the world, to confirm their assertions. They shewed vice triumphant, virtue oppressed, the basest crimes unpunished, the greatest merit unrewarded. Gertrude seemed to want no other example than herself to prove the truth of these positions. What had she done, what faults had she committed? yet her life was absolute misery. Had she reasoned rightly, she would have drawn from this very circumstance the strongest proofs of the truth of religion, every page of the sacred writings abounding with threatenings to those who continued in sin, and promises of mercy to those who repented. 'What ye sow, that ye shall reap.' Mrs. Jones and

Mrs. Lumley both broke the commands of God, although in different ways, and their punishment followed their transgression. Yet as in many other cases, the tares could not be plucked up without injuring the wheat. Had Miss M. reflected upon the parables of our Saviour, and the Epistles of the Apostles, she would have found sufficient evidence of the truth of Revelation, in the scenes that surrounded her, and would have learnt that she was not so perfect as she thought herself. Mrs. Lumley was educated a member of the Established Church, but its doctrines militated against her vices, and she adopted the sentiments of the Presbyterians, so far as related to the article of predestination, although she really knew no more what the term meant than many other ignorant people who use it. Her acute and talented daughter was not long before she discovered the bias of her mother's mind, and openly ridiculed her ideas. "Are we," said Miss M., "to think God a tyrant, or a just and merciful father? If he be the latter, he can never deprive his creatures of their free will. Mercy would not allow him to doom any unoffending being to eternal misery, and justice would not convict a creature for what was involuntary."

"Well, all I know," said Mr. L., "is that what is to be will be."

Gertrude went to church, and there she derived neither instruction nor consolation from the sermons of the spiritual teacher. The curate was far advanced in years, and sought some excuse for a

long life, very improperly spent; he satisfied himself, and tried to convince his hearers, by preaching the doctrines which are sometimes improperly styled Evangelical: 'You are to look to Christ alone for pardon, your own merits are nothing,—worse than nothing,—you can do nothing; no good works, no moral life is of any importance in the sight of God;' but he forgot to add that, if good works did not speak in favour of a man, evil ones rose up in fearful array against him. His hearers naturally asked themselves 'of what use is a moral life, if, by continuing in sin, only believing in the Son of God, though we commit the greatest crimes, we shall be still be saved?'

The rector was a young and fashionable man, of a high family, and great acquirements; his academical career had been a bright one, and the fellowship of his college was acknowledged to have been well deserved. So far all was well: but in doctrine, as in practice, himself and his curate were exactly the reverse of each other. Throwing aside the articles of Justification and Atonement, as too humiliating for those free from gross sins, the sermons of the young Rector were strictly moral, and, as his conduct accorded with his precept, no one found fault with him.

If, from the stately church, Gertrude turned to the humble meeting-house, she heard there that every man was fated to good or evil before he was born, and that, with reference to a future state, it was entirely immaterial what life a man led;—that

the murderer, and the good man, were fated to be such before either had any existence in the world. She looked at the articles of religion, and she saw little difference between the Predestination of the church of England and the Predestination of the Calvinists; and, unable, half unwilling, to reconcile contradictions, she adopted the opinions of Atheists, and rashly disclaimed a belief in any religion. The occurrences of her life strengthened her in this resolution.

The death of his mother had been a most severe trial to Mr. Leclerc: in the midst of those vexations which more particularly assail the great and distinguished, Mr. L. had found the advice and affection of his mother a powerful consolation; that he had now lost, and his home, without her, was cheerless and uncomfortable. His family mansion was still let, he had no inclination to reside there; and the alarming illness of a relative called him from London. He broke up his establishment at the villa, and, much to the regret of his neighbours, left Surrey, without fixing any period for his return.

Gertrude occasionally visited her former governesses, but she found herself coolly received, and, deeply irritated at their conduct, she ceased to trouble them with her company. Her grandmother had obtained a situation as nurse in a gentleman's family, and Mrs. Lumley let her apartments to a Dissenting Minister and his sister. They were ever regular in their attendance upon their religious duties; but, in the winter, they

requested that the fire might be kept in on the Sunday to air the room. Mrs. L. said it was a shame the fire should burn to waste. Gertrude and Mary were always sent there, and she generally busied herself in washing plates and other things for which warm water was required. On several Sundays, she was in the kitchen washing, and Miss M. mentally exclaimed, "Yet my mother is a religious woman." Mrs. L. actually pretended to be such, and, like Cromwell, could bring forward Scripture to sanction her faults. Her constant and unceasing toil was, she asserted, industry; her covetousness, care; her unkindness to her daughter, parental love; her violence of temper, Christian firmness; her desecration of the Sabbath, works of necessity. Argument was thrown away upon her, self-complacent and self-satisfied, she listened to reproof with impatience, and answered expostulation with abuse.

The Rev. Mr. Rolfe was a man every way unfit for the pastoral charge he had assumed: his education had been confined, nor did he possess any natural talent; he mistook the tendency of the texts which he pretended to expound, and puzzled himself and his hearers. His sister was a plain, respectable woman, who often said she wished 'Charles had attended to his business: he was much more fit to serve tea and sugar than to preach the Gospel.' Gertrude thought so too.

But, although Gertrude disliked him, the unfavourable sentiment was not reciprocal. Mr. Rolfe

became much attached to her and, to her very great amazement, offered her his hand.

"The idea is ridiculous," exclaimed Miss M. angrily: "why, sir, if there were no other objection, your age and character would be enough."

"My age, madam? I am not forty, and my character—"

"Should teach you that a thoughtless girl of eighteen is not a fit wife for you. I beg I may hear no more of this." Mr. R. was too much offended to remain, and Miss M. was made to suffer for her rejection of the gentleman.

When Mr. L. returned from his journey, he gave Miss M. some gold, and told her to prepare herself for an excursion to Windsor. Mr. L. at times was visited by remorse, and, while his compunctuous feelings were prevalent, he was kind to Gertrude.

"I shall hire a coach;" he said, "and I dare say when your mother finds I will go, she will accompany us. I have to go on some business, and we may as well make it pleasant."

Until she entered the coach, Miss M. was not aware who were to accompany them; her cheek crimsoned with anger when she discovered with whom she was associated. A pert, ignorant gentleman, who filled the high situation of clerk to an attorney of rather a questionable character, who persisted in styling her, 'His adorable Gertrude,' and who was encouraged by Mr. Lumley, was one of the party, and the others were less eligible com-*

panions. Mrs. Pearson, a stout, vulgar woman, had but just obtained her release from the King's Bench, where she had been confined several years, and her son had figured at the Old Bailey as a witness, whose oath was bought for half a crown. Mr. West had been tried for forgery, but acquitted through a legal flaw, and Miss Davis was well known to the frequenters of Vauxhall. Gertrude was seated next to Mr. West, who entertained himself by talking through the coach window to the attorney's clerk, and Mr. Pearson, who were on horseback. The Epping hunt, cockfighting and horse-racing, were the subjects upon which they conversed; and Gertrude mentally vowed that no persuasion should ever induce her again to make one of Mr. Lumley's erudite and decorous parties. Gertrude viewed Eton College with feelings nearly as misanthropical as those which must have influenced Gray when he wrote his well-known Ode; and she turned from the spot, exclaiming, 'Some of those gay youths will live miserably and die ignominiously.'

The Castle and the Forest rivetted her attention, and she received some pleasure while wandering through the mazes of the latter.

Gertrude was seated on the grass, with one of her arms round Mary's neck, when an exclamation of 'Here is a fine party!' startled her, she looked up, and perceived two young men, the elder one was Mr. Leclerc, and, as he turned away, he said contemptuously, 'What a set!' Miss M. looked round. Mr. Lumley was extended on the grass

fast asleep, the bowl of a pipe was in his hand, the end sticking in his mouth; her mother was venting her rage in opprobrious epithets, and Mrs. Pearson and Miss Davis were helping themselves to spirits in abundance. The attorney's clerk was talking to Gertrude, who, wrapped in meditation, had not been aware of what he was saying; and the other two, half intoxicated, were discoursing in the slang language of the circles they frequented.

“Oh, what a set! He might well say so,” exclaimed Gertrude hastily rising. She would follow him, she would tell him her real situation, and entreat him not to blame her for what was her misfortune, not her fault.

But Gertrude missed Mr. Leclerc and his cousin; she walked into the interior of the forest, and they had gone towards the river. Disappointed and unhappy, Gertrude rejoined the party, and was thankful when the approach of evening shrouded her from general observation.

When about five miles distant from home, on their return, Mrs. Lumley asked Gertrude for her handkerchief, that she might tie it round Mary's neck. Miss M. had lost it in the forest. This was an opportunity of venting her anger which Mrs. Lumley could not let escape her, and she continued her reproaches until her daughter's patience was exhausted, and, pushing open the coach door when it stopped, that the gentlemen might obtain some liquor, she jumped out.

“Where are you going?” demanded Mr. Lumley.

"To your house ; home I cannot call it. I shall walk."

Mr. Fenton, the attorney's clerk, could not suffer her to walk alone, and he pressed his unwelcome company.

"I'll be hanged if I go a step farther, even if the admiral himself was here!" exclaimed a voice, which was perfectly familiar to her, and, for the first time, Lieutenant Ellison appeared a welcome companion.

"Gertrude !" he exclaimed, as he reeled towards her, "take pity upon me, and afford me your protection."

"You must be a valiant officer to need it."

"O wine, wine, my dear girl, vanquishes the bravest : now, if you will not send me off, Dudley will get me to take another bottle, and what shall I be fit for then ?"

"Mr. Fenton," said Gertrude, coolly, "I told you before that your company was not agreeable."

"Set your sail, sir, and be off," cried Mr. Ellison, levelling his Opera glass at Mr. F. ; "by the cut of your jib, I imagine you are some would-be ; so please to retire."

Mr. E. waved him off with one hand, and offered his arm to Gertrude. She took it, and he hastily said—"Who is that rascal?"

She told him.

"So ! I thought I knew him. I remember the gent very well, his master is employed between men and their wives, girls and their beaux, and so on. But, where have you been ?"

Gertrude told him.

“ Ah ! many an hour have I spent in that same place. I was fourteen when I went to Eton ; they were merry days. Who talks of school discipline ? the Reverends, the Master, and the Fellows, care as much for it as their scholars.”

“ Oh, hush,” said Miss M., forgetting her anti-religious ideas, “ do not speak ill of any.”

“ Stuff ; they are all hypocrites ; I’ve seen, and sure I ought to know. Don’t you know I was intended for a parson ?”

“ No ; how should I ?”

“ I was. I was sent to that seat and seminary of orthodoxy and piety, —— college ; not, mind you, that the college was a whit worse than the others, in many respects it was better. But I will tell you how I lived there.”

“ I do not want to hear, and I dare say I should not be edified by the recital.”

“ I suppose not ; but that —— hypocrite, Leclerc, has brought it all to my mind.”

“ What ? whom do you mean ?” said Gertrude hastily. “ I know Mr. Leclerc, and I know he was the greatest ornament to it, that ever —— college boasted.”

“ Aye, was he so ? that is more than you can tell : he was my companion, and pleaded letters from mamma, to escape collegiate punishment, when he enjoyed the gaiety of Bath, or the splendour of London. But he is a stately saint, now ; his mother or himself was dying, and that, he says,

recalled him to his senses. I have seen him this very day, and he read me a lecture on sobriety."

Miss M. was silent. "Was, then, Mr. Leclerc merely an amended man; had he been the nightly brawler, the college profligate; and was his occasional ill health, the result and consequence of an immoral life? Was his seriousness remorse; his morality repentance; and were the sentiments feigned that he had disclosed in early life, and the truth and beauty of which had touched the heart of his youthful friend? Was his purity pretence, was his religion hypocrisy? Nay, then, religion must be false." When will men learn to separate cause and effect, the professors and the thing professed? When will they own that Christianity and self called Christians, are very different things?

Miss M. roused herself from her reverie. "Lieutenant E., where are you going?"

The question staggered him. "I forgot that I had been from London eighteen months: are my rooms let?"

"They are. An Irish family have them now."

"I am sorry; if so, I must march back to town, but shall see you home first. Mrs. Lumley must give her lodgers notice; but no, it is not worth while, for I am going with Lord L—— to ——."

By this time Mr. E. was sober: Gertrude spoke of Mr. Leclerc, but the Lieutenant evaded the conversation, and would talk to her of herself.

"You are mad," said Gertrude; "that is the

only excuse I can make for you. You have sufficient pride, why press your undesired society ?”

“ It was not undesired half an hour ago ; I suppose you thought that your reputation would suffer less even in it than if you made Mr. Fenton your companion.”

“ I did not think about it ; you know how cruelly I am circumstanced, Mr. Ellison ; why render me more unhappy ? You are aware that, if you will insult me, I cannot resent your conduct as others can, who have parents that protect them. Why do you seek me, why not take my answer, and Richardson’s advice, and with a lady of your own rank be happy, and forget me ? for I tell you the truth when I say that you are as indifferent to me as that same Mr. Fenton, whom you despise.”

“ That I will not believe ; if you will not see me, you shall read my letters ; for, if you return them, I’ll be my own postman, and make you peruse them.”

Agitated and vexed, Gertrude stopped. “ You go no farther with me, Lieutenant Ellison.”

“ Very well ; then I will stay here ;” and he held her hand in his own. This was too much, and tears of vexation filled her eyes.

“ Go, now,” said the Lieutenant ; when Mr. Fenton appeared at a turn of the road. Gertrude involuntarily drew back. The Lieutenant smiled.

“ Come, let us be friends, my fair tormentor ; I will be as steady as a judge, and talk of riding, or any nonsense you like, but leave you I will not,

until I see you at home, and free from intrusion."

Although Mr. E. kept his word, Gertrude was wrong in trusting to it, for by doing so she seemed to forget, what no female ought, that the person, who has once insulted her can never be a proper guide and friend. Mr. Ellison knocked with all the consequence of rank, and saying, "My promise extends only to here," unclasped her bracelet, and, declaring he would retain it, left her, and went to a surgeon who had once attended him, when lame from a kick of his horse. Mr. Parker readily accommodated him with apartments, and Mr. E. entertained himself by writing to her, while Gertrude was engaged in a fresh scene of contention.

"Gertrude!" said Mr. Lumley, throwing some silver on the table, "I want some rum, go and fetch me some."

"Sir! Mr. Lumley!" said Miss M., indignantly, "would you send me to a public-house?"

Mrs. Lumley knew that she must not say too much to her husband, but her elder daughter must not escape: her 'pride and impudence' must be attacked. Wearied and disgusted, Gertrude took Mary, and retired, but she could not sleep, and ruminated on what Mr. Ellison had said of Mr. Leclerc. She at last attributed his observations to intoxication, and very strangely determined to write to Mr. Leclerc. She did:

"My dear Mr. Leclerc,

"I am afraid you are very angry with me, and I know I deserve it, for not telling you the real reason why I did not

call at your house as usual. I do not think I could write now, had you not seen me yesterday, and in what company? Oh, I cannot bear to think of them, nor can I explain, in the limits of a letter, why I was with them. If I have not for ever offended you, you will perhaps see me, and I will tell you why I left the Signora, and ceased to visit her. If it be not convenient now, and you would prefer my writing, I will do so, for I shall not rest until I prove to you, my kind and valued friend, that, though with those people, I did not wish to associate with them, and that I never will again be seen with such. I am miserable here, and I should be so happy if you knew any lady who would take me as her companion. Why I wish for such a situation, I will tell you, if you will see

Your apparently neglectful,

but not ungrateful,

GERTRUDE MANVERS."

If Mr. Leclerc had seen this letter, he would not have been surprized at her familiarity, for he had often written notes to her, commencing, 'My dear Miss Manvers,' and 'My young friend.' She had some of them; as she looked over them she said, "I wish I was again your 'young friend;' heigh ho! I do not think I shall be able to speak to you."

"Where are you going?" asked her mother. "Oh, very well; I wish this Mr. Somebody would take you off my hands."

"Now, I think," said Gertrude mentally, as she saw her image in their lodger's glass, "that my mother would act more properly in not letting me

go. If Mr. Leclerc was what Mr. E. says, I do not—yes, I do—know that I should not love him. for he would be like these people, and I am sure they are despicable. So true it is that, while we respect ourselves, others will respect us."

Mr. Leclerc had returned to Richmond about six months before. The footman was a strange one, but he civilly requested her to walk in, and, when ushered into the well-known breakfast parlour, her voice failed, and a few minutes elapsed before she could say:

"Tell Mr. Leclerc that a young lady wishes to see him."

"You cannot, Miss; if you have any letter or message, I will deliver it. Mrs. Leclerc has been so dangerously ill that he could not take any rest, and he is quite indisposed."

Mrs. Leclerc!—Gertrude had heard enough. "I will," she said hastily,—"I will call again." But she never meant to do so. Mr. Leclerc must be married, and, from kindness, he might request his wife to receive her as a companion; and Miss M. could not endure the idea of becoming the associate of a lady to whose husband she was attached. Oh no! Gertrude had still sufficient rectitude to blush at the thought. She passed the house of her governesses, and returned to her miserable home to suffer fresh privations and mortifications.

An advertisement in the *Times* for a companion caught her eye, and she determined to apply for the situation. She procured the address at a jeweller's

in Cheapside, and waited upon the fair and lovely Laura Vernon. Miss M. did not know the name of the gentleman who had refused to become her guardian; and, when told to call on Miss V., at Mr. Milsom's, she did not know that she was going to his house. A footman in a very rich livery introduced her into a room where sat the loveliest female Gertrude had ever seen. Her dress was dark green, with emerald and pearl ornaments; her hair was interwoven with sprigs of pearl, and fell in luxuriant profusion over her beautiful neck. She had a richly inlaid writing desk before her: one of her finely formed hands rested on her knee, the other held the pen with which she had been writing. Altogether she looked too lovely for a merely human being; and the lightness and elegance of the room accorded with its fair inhabitant. The curtains were blue satin, with white silk fringe, over worked net, and were drawn back by silver cords. Some canaries were warbling in silver cages suspended between the festoons of the curtains; and some rare and curious plants flourished in the gilded recesses of the apartment. The Turkey carpet yielded to the tread, and the richly ornamented couches were incentives to idleness.

Miss Vernon scanned Gertrude, and then smilingly said, "I wish you had come before. I think I should like you, but I engaged a young female not an hour ago."

Gertrude felt grieved. Miss V.'s affability was equal to her beauty, and Miss M. left the splendid

mansion, sincerely regretting that she had failed in obtaining the situation of companion to the then favourite friend of its owner's daughter.

Mr. Lumley much wished Gertrude to accompany him to Blackheath. He had some business there, and he had promised Mary that she should go with him. Miss M. refused.

"Your friends, Mr. L., were sufficient to disgust any one with your parties of pleasure."

"I am going alone, Gertrude."

"Do go," said Mary, kissing her hand, "dear Gertrude, do go."

Miss M. was positive, and they went alone.

Mr. L. transacted his business, and then, as usual, repaired to a tavern. Mary would not have been checked by her father had she drunk wine or spirits, but she liked neither, and teased her father to leave.

"Don't drink any more;" and "It's getting dark, father;" she said several times.

"Hold your tongue, Miss;" and Mr. L. called for an additional bottle of claret. He was intoxicated when he left the inn, and drove furiously. Mary screamed with terror, and exclaimed, "Father, father, do not drive so fast." She had scarcely spoken when the horse was impelled against a coach, and herself and her father thrown out.

Some time passed before the surgeon ascertained the injuries which they had received. Mr. L. was dreadfully bruised; his left arm was broken, and his head was much cut by the sharp stones on which he had fallen. Mary lay on the ground with

her left arm over her neck; the standers-by raised her, but one glance was enough—the pole of the coach had struck her temple, and the little delicate creature was a warm, but breathless, corpse. Mr. Lumley was well known to the different stage and hackney coachmen; one of them rode off to acquaint his wife with the fatal occurrence.

Mrs. L. heard the tale with little emotion, but Miss M. was nearly frantic with grief; Mary was her sole pleasure, the affectionate and gentle companion of her dull moments. So far as she would let her, Mary would amuse her by her playfulness, and beguile her of a smile, by her innocent and simple endeavours to please her. Gertrude could not be torn from the bed on which her dead sister was laid; for hours Miss M. watched the beautiful corpse, and could not persuade herself that Mary was dead, until she felt her stiff cold hand. Gertrude had not prayed since she had renounced her belief in a God; but in the chamber of death, Atheism vanished from her mind, and, throwing herself on the ground, she fervently besought forgiveness for her past offences. She rose from her devotional attitude with a calmness of mind to which she had been long a stranger, and bent her steps to the chamber of Mr. Lumley, to see if she could in any way alleviate his sufferings.

CHAPTER VII.

GERTRUDE found Mr. Lumley in a state of stupor, from which he never awoke. It was the opinion of the medical gentlemen that the injuries he had received would not of themselves prove fatal, had not the liquor which he had drunk heightened the fever, and rendered an already disarranged system unable to bear the effects of so severe a shock.

The bodies of Mary and her father were both interred in Greenwich churchyard, and Mrs. Lumley and Gertrude returned home. Mr. Lumley had always received the dividends due on the money in the funds: as he died possessed of property to the amount of £87, his widow was compelled to administer, and, when she had done so, she went to the bank, to receive the dividends due at the October quarter. The clerk asked the usual questions, and, after examining the books, informed Mrs. L. that £1855 standing in the name of William Lumley, as trustee to Gertrude Manvers, had been sold out two years previously. Words could not describe the consternation of Mrs. L.: her husband's extrava-

gance was now accounted for, and her daughter was deprived of her property through her instrumentality.

The appointment of executors and trustees is a serious thing; they are the person's representatives, and have the same control over his property as he himself had, before it passed to them. This power they are presumed to exercise for the benefit of the estate; it is invested in them for that purpose, but numerous instances of malversation have sufficiently proved that they frequently use it for their own advantage. An executor may be sued but if he have no property to make good his peculation, what then? The better way is to leave the person executor who is to receive the benefit; or, in the cases of children, or incompetent persons, it is better to appoint some person, whose public or professional character would irredeemably suffer by any misconduct on his part. "Interest, madam," said a man, through whom the lady he addressed had lost several thousand pounds, "interest would make a man sell his own soul." Mr. Lumley averred that he sold the money for the purpose of purchasing some land, which would yield good interest for the principal expended. As trustee, he could do so, and no law of the bank prevented his receiving the money: he applied it to very different purposes. As a traveller his expenses were paid, and he received a salary of £150 per annum; this, with any reasonable man in his station, would have sufficed; but Mr. L. was a profligate, in every way

that he could be such. He was deeply in debt when Gertrude's money was transferred to him, and he scrupled not to free himself from his embarrassments by liquidating with it the claims which existed against him. When near his wife, he indulged in only his customary extravagance : it was in Cheltenham, Cambridge, and other places, that Mr. Lunley was a fashionable man. There he kept his valet, frequented the theatres and other places of public resort, gamed, and, to complete his character, kept a mistress. As home cost him little, and he sometimes gained from the unwary, he was enabled to do so without deeply involving himself; but, in the short space of two years, all that remained of Gertrude's property, his salary, his perquisites, and his betting and gambling transactions, were the £87 to which his widow administered.

Miss Manvers was in her room perusing some of Dr. Wakefield's controversial writings, when her mother burst into it.

"What is the matter?" said Gertrude carelessly. Her mother was so frequently discomposed by the most trivial circumstances that Miss M. had ceased to attach any importance to her emotion.

Her expressions shocked her daughter, who still could not define what had occurred. At length Mrs. Lunley made her sensible. Gertrude was calm, she was neither deceived nor astonished.

"Well, you take it very patiently," said her mother, wildly execrating her husband's memory.

"I cannot call it back, Madam; you effectually prevented my receiving any benefit from the money: why should I fret at its loss?"

"Oh, no, you think it will be no loss to you while you have a mother to labour for you:" and so Mrs. L. continued, until Gertrude left the house to escape her violence.

Miss M. could not imagine how her mother would act; but she was not long in suspense. Mrs. Lumley gave up her house, and took two small rooms in a public part of the village; in one she sold butter, bread, &c. and the other served them for a bed and living room.

Miss M. had found the former situation disagreeable, but her present one was intolerable: she would have borne the envious remarks made by the ignorant village girls upon herself, had she not been subjected to insults of a severer nature. Had not Gertrude possessed a beautiful face, her figure would have been sufficiently captivating; as it was, a critic would have been puzzled to decide which was the more lovely. Those who cannot appreciate any other accomplishments are, as well as the refined, susceptible of personal beauty; and the agricultural labourer, as well as the sporting Londoner, frequently told her she was very handsome. To obtain a situation where she might pass unnoticed through life appeared the only way to free herself from her present troubles; and, learning that a lady required a governess for two daughters, under fourteen, Gertrude waited upon her.

Miss M. found her extremely haughty : she had been pretty, but time had given a degree of harshness to her features which were not rendered more pleasing by her unbending manners. She condescended to express herself satisfied with what she undertook to teach, and then said, I must know who you are, where you have lived, what are your connexions, and I must have two respectable references. Gertrude's first answer was enough.

"I wonder," exclaimed the lady, "I wonder at your presumption ; the whole county knows your mother's character."

"Madam, I cannot help that, it is sufficiently afflictive, I need not be reproached with it !"

"Your own character is little better. I have heard of you before, your intimacy with Lieutenant Ellison does you no credit."

Gertrude forgot that the lady arrogated to herself superiority, and she passionately answered, "Lieutenant Ellison would not dare to speak ill of me, he never had any reason."

"I dare say not," said the lady coolly : "when you were seen walking with him at all hours of the night. Philip, show this young woman out."

Miss M. let this incident disturb her more than it ought : the lady was the daughter of a West End shoemaker ; her person and her money were irresistible, and the third son of a country gentleman became her unenvied husband. They had a large family ; and, before Gertrude was thrown in his way, Lieutenant Ellison had paid one of the daughters

great attention. The Rev. Mr. Rolfe was a welcome visitor, and from him the lady learnt who had kept Mr. Ellison at Mrs. Lumley's. Incensed with Gertrude for rejecting him, Mr. Rolfe continually spoke ill of her: he had married the eldest daughter, and, to gratify her malevolence, the mother of Mrs. Rolfe hurt the pride and wounded the feelings of a female every way her superior. Miss M. was not discouraged, though her applications were unsuccessful.

"I like you much," said the beautiful and good wife of the Rector; "but I have heard much to your disadvantage: I do not altogether credit the tales I have been told, in fact I doubt the veracity of my informers; but you are young, and my public station imposes upon me peculiar duties. I am required not only to think the instructors and attendants of my children above suspicion, but to see that the world thinks them so, too. My husband allows me to select whom I please, and a due regard for his character will not permit me to engage an incompetent person, or one to whom any disgrace attaches. I should not attach much importance to hearsay, but you are particularly remiss in attendance upon public worship."

Gertrude rose, she would not say that a disbelief in religion had prevented her attendance upon its public ordinances; and she bade the lady Good morning, without trying to remove her prejudices against herself.

Every hour made her more wretched; her mother

did not consider that Gertrude suffered even more than she by the loss of her property, but she reproached her, as though she was to blame for its improper application.

"My dear, will you serve me a quartern loaf?"

This was said by a Smithfield butcher, who had come into the country for a day's pleasure. Gertrude gave him the bread, and then walked into the room.

"Could Mr. Leclerc see me now," said Miss M. mentally, "what would he think?"

She forgot that there is no disgrace in endeavouring to procure a subsistence, by honest industry, and she should have regarded the appellatives which so much offended her as proofs of the ignorance of those by whom they were uttered. All were not born rich or great, and, though Mr. L. was not so divested of aristocratic feelings as to make his trades-people his companions, he would never have neglected, nor treated Gertrude with contempt, because, through her mother's misconduct, she was placed in a low station.

"Gertrude," said Mrs. Lumley, "give me that knife."

In rising, Miss M. threw down a lamp, the nut was unscrewed, and the oil went on her dress and on the floor.

"You negligent, you wasteful, hussy," exclaimed Mrs. L., striking her on the head; "how durst you do so?"

"You must suppose I would not do it purposely,

for my own sake," said Gertrude, wiping her dress.

"Get up," said Mrs. L.: "go and serve that woman."

"I cannot go now, my hands are soiled with the oil." Mrs. L. was a short, thin woman: to engage in a contest with her daughter would only show her own weakness; but what she could not effect by force she ever did by artifice, and, when Gertrude bent forward, Mrs. Lumley drew her chair from under her. Miss M. fell back, and her head struck against a projection of the wall; she lay stunned and unable to rise; and, still not satisfied with the punishment she had inflicted, Mrs. L. flung some water over her.

"These lady airs and fainting fits come of your boarding school education," said Mrs. L., as Gertrude rose.

The room above was unoccupied, and Gertrude had leave to use it; she walked in and locked the door. The house was detached, and the palings which separated it from the fields, at the back, were broken and torn away in several places. Not quite sensible, Gertrude leant against the open window, and vacantly gazed upon the scene before her; a gentleman was slowly pacing the path, he soon saw her, and, in the next moment, Lieutenant Ellison was by her side.

"Gertrude, you are dripping wet, your head is bleeding!"

Miss M. put her hand to her head; the blood, which the cold had staunched, again flowed when

she moved : and, half giddy, she leaned for support upon a table which stood by her.

"What has occurred?" said the Lieutenant hastily. "Gertrude, who has dared to ill-treat you?"

"Mrs. Lumley: have you not heard her threaten to destroy me?"

Mr. E. did not trouble himself to ask Gertrude's consent, his chaise was waiting; and, without speaking, he conveyed her to it, and ordered his groom to drive to the nearest surgeon's. Miss M. had relapsed into a state of stupor, and Mr. Parker found the injuries she had received more severe than Mr. Ellison had anticipated.

"Her life hangs by a thread," was his reply, "she must be kept quiet."

"Let her have every necessary attendance. Mr. Parker, you know me."

The surgeon bowed, and Mr. E. returned, restless and uneasy, to London.

For some days Gertrude's lethargy continued; the only object she noticed was a picture of the celebrated Sir Philip Sidney, and this attracted her notice because it slightly resembled Mr. Leclerc. When Gertrude did recover, a sense of impropriety flashed upon her mind, nor did she know how to extricate herself from her difficulties: the only way to retreat was to pay Mr. Parker, and return her thanks to the Lieutenant.

"Mr. Parker is paid," said Mr. E., "you are my debtor."

"To what amount?"

"An incalculable one, for you have caused me more uneasiness than all the world beside."

"I did not wish to do so." —

"Upon my life, I believe you: I say, you will not return to Mrs. Lumley, at least, not while I live to prevent it."

"You will not make me a prisoner, Lieutenant Ellison."

"No! I dine with my noble uncle to-night, and cannot stay now, but read this letter attentively."

Gertrude did so.

When Mr. E. came the next day, Gertrude said, "You tell me I cannot return to Mrs. L., but you forget that I have an unfailing friend."

"Who?"

"Death,"

"Oh, Gertrude!"

"I am serious. I have endured life too long, and I shall but imitate the great names of antiquity, in ridding myself of it. Did you never hear of a young man who drowned himself many years ago, and left on his desk a paper, with these words written upon it, 'what Cato did and Addison approved could not be wrong.'"

"Addison, Gertrude, does not approve it, he merely paraphrases the words of his hero, and Cato was a heathen."

"I am an infidel—so there is little difference."

"Then why not enjoy life while it lasts? remark your image! was your fine form, were your accomplishments given"—

"Given—who is to give?"

"Well then, are you to seek a grave, are your talents"—

"They will not be adorned by a life of infamy."

"These, Gertrude, are the harsh names the world bestows upon those who have the courage to despise it. The noble mind does not require to be shackled by common forms, nor am I sufficiently mercantile to admire contracts. You, who are so tenaciously fond of the good opinion of the world, have yet lost, irrevocably lost, it. You have been scandalized and ill-treated because you were envied: those who could not blame you attacked you for your mother's faults; and think you they will let slip this opportunity of stigmatizing you? Believe me, they will not: you have already the odium, why should you not receive the advantages, of my protection? Gertrude fixed her eyes on the picture of Sir Philip, and Mr. E., who was watching her, likewise looked at it.

"It resembles Mr. Leclerc."

Miss M. started. "You say he was your college companion?"

"He was, at once, the most entertaining and dissipated of the set I was there entangled with."

Gertrude's affection for Mr. L. was different to the preference she felt for Mr. E.; she looked upon the one as an amusing intimate, the other she regarded as a guarding, guiding friend—but, if she credited Mr. Ellison, he was not entitled to her love; it had been accorded to his virtues, and Mr. E.

averred that he possessed none. But of what importance was it to her whether he did or not, she must never again mix with him : he, like others, could only think of her with contempt : fatal delusion ! besides, Mr. Ellison had a claim upon her gratitude. He offered her pleasure, distinction, the opportunity of setting the world at defiance, of becoming the patroness of freedom of thought !

"I wonder that you should advocate these parish laws, Gertrude : did worldly forms ever yet bind the heart ? But they must be observed for the benefit of others : the clergy would lose their fees, and magistrates and overseers the power of tormenting worthy men, were my opinions generally acted upon. Let a female be what she will, unless her husband can pay £2000 or £3000 for a divorce, he must maintain her and her children ; although he may have the strongest proofs of her guilt. On the other hand, an amiable woman may be tied to some unfeeling being, who may delight in outraging her feelings, yet she has no redress ; she must bear all !"

"Perhaps so ; but she enjoys the esteem of her friends, she receives the respect of society."

"Not so, Gertrude. A wife neglected by her husband is a mark for scorn to point at ; the world thinks it may take advantages, for who will protect her ? she must endure the desertion of her husband, and the contemptuous pity of her associates. If you doubt my assertions, saunter round Hyde Park ; remark the flattered mistresses of our nobility, and

then view their wives; or, if you like it better, contrast the state of the Princess of Wales with that of the favourites of her husband. Whatever may be charged against her, nothing can be proved, yet she is excluded from society, while they find a place in it.

Gertrude rose. "I have heard enough, Mr. E. ; I do not feel inclined to lose my self esteem, and shall therefore decline your offers. You will inform me what is the sum you have paid Mr. Parker, Mrs. L. is yet able to discharge it."

"Then you intend to return to her?"

"Yes; and if she will not repay you, I will, before I die. Lieutenant Ellison, let me pass."

"Go, Miss M. ; far be it from me to detain you against your will; but remember, Gertrude, who will always gladly receive you."

Gertrude was afraid of trusting to her own resolution; she hastened quickly down stairs, and walked rapidly towards her mother's. Mr. E. followed her, and, as he had expected, Mrs. Lumley refused to receive her.

"No, madam; I place no faith in the tale you tell, nor would I believe a thousand Mr. Parkers. You chose to leave your comfortable home, and you must take the consequence."

"Upon my life, Mrs. Lumley; your daughter—"

"O, sir; take her with you, I want none of her company."

"I believe you, Mrs. L. ; you rejoiced in being relieved of a burthen as you are pleased to style me. Mr. Ellison, I will accompany you."

Mr. Ellison had never occupied his house in Bruton-street ; his mother wished to remain there, and his erratic life rendered it immaterial to him where he staid, during his occasional visits to London. He took apartments for Gertrude in Oxford-street, and introduced her to his fashionable associates and their friends. Miss M. could not complain of the want of female society, neither could she object to those who were presented to her, they were her equals. She became passionately fond of theatrical amusements, and, while receiving the admiration of a group of titled officers, and hearing her criticisms applauded, Gertrude said she was happy, but her deep sighs contradicted her words. Miss M. had professed herself an infidel, she now felt it necessary to be one ; why should she not enjoy life ? But the toasted beauty, whose rich apparel lent additional lustre to her personal loveliness, was far less at ease than the unnoticed victim of a mother's anger. It was in vain that she sought to banish reflection ; her thoughts haunted her, and she plunged into dissipation, to escape their torturing suggestions. Gertrude became thin, and she lost her colour ; she had learnt to wear an artificial one when she liked, but, when under the influence of her irritable feelings, she forgot disguise, and frequently removed the false colouring which her kind friends had taught her to use.

Lieutenant E. was going to Portsmouth. Gertrude would go, too, and he willingly consented, for her altered appearance made him completely mis-

rable, and he thought the pure air would renovate her health. In some measure it did so : she would remain on board the ship, and, while its novelty engaged her attention, her mind was more tranquil.

Gertrude had heard a great deal of the scene a ship of war presented when paid off, and, very contrary to Mr. E.'s wish, she witnessed one. "What wretches !" she said scornfully, as she left the quarter deck with one of the senior officers. The lieutenant heard her, and her observation compelled him to think—"What raised her above them? His caprice ; if he ceased to afford her his mis-called protection, what resource had she? If the virtuous Gertrude Manvers had not found friends, who would assist the cast-off mistress of the dissipated Westropp Ellison? Those unfortunates were, after all, her equals ; she was not the less degraded because he chose to shield her from insult." He turned hastily round, and ordered some of the men to prepare a boat.

"Come, Gertrude, you cannot stay here ; this is no place for you."

Miss M. was glad to escape. When she reached her lodgings, she threw herself negligently on a couch.

"Upon what are you ruminating, Gertrude?"

"What I have seen to day. Never, after this, talk of the religion of the Navy. My dear Westropp, who, that did believe in a Supreme Being, could think so, after witnessing such flagitious wickedness?"

Gertrude's 'my dear Westropp' was a more severe reproach to him than any she could have uttered, and, trying unsuccessfully to rally his spirits, he gave up the attempt, and remained silent; while she read some French novels which he had procured for her.

The lieutenant had been always fond of children, but the birth of a son had not added to his happiness; it had, indeed, increased his uneasiness. When Gertrude played with her beautiful infant, Ellison would have given the world, had it been his, to have made that child entitled to the name Gertrude insisted he should bear. With strange inconsistency, she wished him to be baptized. Mr. E. consented.

"But what shall be his name, Gertrude?"

"Manvers-Ellison."

The lieutenant was silent.

"Your own child," said Gertrude haughtily, "has surely a right to your name."

"Not in the eyes of the world."

"The world, sir! I thought you despised it."

"Well, well, call the child what you like. But who are to be his sponsors?"

"You, I, and your friend Harvey."

"This appears to me a most ridiculous thing: you are an atheist, yet, at a Christian ordinance, you will answer for his instruction in that faith."

"I will so. My godfather was some great officer whom I never saw, and my godmothers were my grandmother and mother: like others, they looked

upon the ceremony as a mere form, and held themselves free from any obligation to teach me the doctrines of the Christian religion. Perhaps, Ellison, had I been taught the Scriptures when a child, I should never have doubted them; now I dare not believe them; but my child shall not blame me for want of instruction, even if he do for his existence. He shall be brought up a Christian; if revelation be true, he will participate in its benefits; if it be false, it will do him no injury."

The lieutenant was astonished. "You mean to inculcate opinions at which you sneer."

"I do not. Could I teach precepts which I hourly disregard? No, Ellison, but there are those who believe, and who practice, them, and to them shall your son be confided."

Gertrude's words wrung his heart, and, as he viewed her evident wretchedness, he wished, earnestly wished, that he had never known her, or that she had been his wife. There was the correct mind, yet still she erred herself: she did not wish others to imitate her example, she was not at rest, yet would she not disturb the peace of any. So beautiful, so much admired, would she have been less so as Mrs. Ellison? would not rather her rank have given lustre to her charms? Why could he not make her his wife? he might, certainly, but could he banish from her recollection the scenes to which he had introduced her? could he give her back her uncontaminated mind? could he restore her self-respect? No, he could not: regretting his con-

duct, yet not daring to repent, he listened with agony to her observations. He had never experienced similar sensations, the reason was he loved her, and he could not endure her evident unhappiness. Gertrude appeared to read his thoughts, and her voice faltered as she spoke :

“ Why have you contrived to make your society necessary to my existence ? there was a time when the whole world would not have bribed me to become your wife ; yet, now, though you have been my worst foe, I could not endure to be absent from you. Why, Westropp, were we not equals in rank ? and then—”

“ Let us drop this moralizing, my dear Gertrude, this Methodism is suitable to neither of us. What will you do with yourself this evening ?”

“ Miss Mastyn has asked me to make one of a party she has to-night.”

“ She is no fit companion for you.”

“ Who then is, sir ? You dine with the Percevals to-day, will Lady Mira admit me to her drawing-room ?”

The lieutenant paced the room, and then said, “ Mrs. Harvey will spend the evening with you.”

“ No, I will not disgrace myself by associating with her, she trifles too much with her husband's peace ; I shall not be surprized to hear of her elopement with Colonel Phillips.”

“ Well, Gertrude ; you must please yourself, I must go now, or I shall be too late.”

It was the Lieutenant's duty occasionally to

visit Horslar Hospital, and Gertrude sometimes accompanied him to enjoy the fine scenery near it. Mr. E. was one morning accosted by a gentleman whose features were familiar to her, but where she had seen him Gertrude could not recollect."

"Who was that?" she enquired, when the Lieut. joined her.

"Mr. Leclerc."

"No such thing," said Gertrude angrily, "do you think I do not know him!"

Mr. E. was not pleased with the emphasis with which she spoke, and coolly replied, "That was Mr. Leclerc; he is much altered; he says he suffered for many months a severe attack of asthma, and that he is about returning to India, as his physicians say the warm climate will restore him to his accustomed health."

"He was never in India, that ever I heard," said Gertrude, "that gentleman is like him, but there is a great difference of manner, voice and person."

"Whom do you mean?"

"Mean, Mr. Arthur Leclerc, whose father was a Commander in the Navy, he has a fine seat in —shire and an elegant villa on the banks of the river at Richmond."

"We have been alluding to different persons. I have not the honour of his acquaintance; he would not notice such a scapegrace as me: this is his cousin."

Gertrude's violent emotion excessively displeased Mr. E.; and, giving way to his natural impetuosity, he swore most bitterly.

"Nay," said Miss M. coolly, "you need not talk so, I shall never see Mr. Leclerc; and, if I did, do you think he would now notice me, such an apostate as I am?"

Mr. E. did not answer her, he was disposed to be irritated at any thing; and, to banish his uneasiness he repaired to the gaming-table, and rose the loser of £1,300. Gertrude and Mr. E. vied with each other in folly and extravagance; he checked her in no pursuit, nor did he deny himself any gratification; he was celebrated as a judge of racers, and kept his stud at Newmarket. Gertrude accompanied him there, and his pride was gratified when he heard the encomiums lavished upon her.

One of his cousins, a student of Cambridge University, had stolen a visit to Newmarket, and, meeting Mr. E., insisted that he should introduce him to Gertrude. He was much pleased with her, and remarked to the lieutenant, when she withdrew,

"You should have married her, Westropp, she would have dignified a throne: how much superior is she to lady Louisa, yet your uncle tells me she is to be your wife."

"If he can persuade me to make her so, Frank, but I have too much respect for her; lady Louisa is an amiable woman, and deserves a better husband than ever I should make. I wish you would consider her ladyship, and £30,000, worth your acceptance: were she married, my uncle would not torment me as he does."

"I thank you, Westropp; do you not think I have eyes? but, nevertheless, her ladyship is so

attached to the companion of her childhood that even the cognizance of his faults cannot change her opinions. India and its burning clime have not erased you from her memory."

"Poor girl! but it will not do, Frank, I have yet too much honour to make her wretched. Tell her I keep a mistress, that I am a gamester, tell her all my faults, she will believe you, and Maria will assist in revealing my real character."

Mr. Francis Ellison was much attached to Maria, the younger sister of his erring cousin, and he promised not to spare the lieutenant, while speaking of him to lady Louisa. Gertrude became every day more wayward: that which pleased her one moment was neglected the next, and even her son lost his power of rivetting her attention. Flattery was sickening, and dissipation wearied her, dress was fatiguing, and solitude unbearable:—had it been possible, she would have flown from herself. Her quarrels with the lieutenant were frequent, and much of their time was spent in mutual re- crimination. She had one morning expressed a wish to pass the day with some of his acquaintances at Isleworth; but when the carriage waited to receive her, she changed her mind and refused to go.

The lieutenant's temper had been already ruffled, and he passionately exclaimed, "Upon my soul, madam, I do not think you know what you wish."

"Our souls, Ellison," said Gertrude mournfully, "are not things to swear by. I have doubted that I possessed one, but there are times when I am

forced to believe I do, and then I look upon you as its destroyer!"

To this heavy accusation he could return no answer; and, too much harassed to think, he ordered his horse, and sought, by the rapidity of his movements, to banish the unpleasant reproofs of his conscience. He looked at the shops as he passed them—"What did Gertrude want?" Nothing; she was absolutely loaded with ornament. A book-seller's caught his eye, and he walked in.

"Give me the latest work you have."

"It is a very expensive one," said the publisher.

"What of that?"

"Your former account is not settled, sir."

Lieut. E. was not more free from the vice of swearing than most of his profession; and, after venting his rage, in many opprobrious epithets, he said, "How much do I owe you?"

"It is £55, some odd shillings."

"There," said Mr. E., throwing down a £30 note, "there is the better half of this great sum. Pray do you think that the nephew and heir of the Rt. Hon. Lord L— need owe a tradesman £50?"

The tradesman really pitied his aristocratic customer, as he handed him the volume. It was not until he laid it on Gertrude's dressing-room table that he reflected it might be one she would be unable to read.

"Look at it, Gertrude; it may be Hebrew or Burmese, for aught I know."

"Oh no, it is English," said Miss M., glancing slightly at it. "Where are you going now?"

"To the Admiralty, and thence to Portland Place ;
I shall not be here till late."

Gertrude looked at the title page. "What, has Mr. Leclerc turned clergyman ? But it was all he was fit for : " and, as she spoke, she turned over the leaves, and her eyes rested on the dedication :

TO ARTHUR LECLERC, Esq., M. P.

"My dear cousin,

"Sir Richard Steele himself tells us that he wrote the 'Christian Hero' under the impression that, having publicly avowed his opinions, he should never afterwards swerve from them, or commit those lamentable extravagances which had so much deteriorated his character. With a somewhat similar idea, I now dedicate these pages to you, convinced that, when I feel inclined to yield to the suggestions of an evil heart, I shall remember my already incalculable obligations to you, and that the remembrance of my acknowledged gratitude will set before me my duty to the world—to my God. To you, under His mercy, I am indebted for my life, and for the instruction how to render existence beneficial to myself, and useful to others. I will not be so unjust to those whom I have known as to say that they failed in inculcating religious and moral duty ; but, however salutary their admonitions may have been to others, they did not succeed in arousing me to a sense of my supineness. When the Almighty formed the world, and placed man in it, He decreed that there should be subordination and distinction among his creatures ; but, in different ages of the world, there have been some who united those virtues and talents, any one of which would have secured the esteem of a great portion of mankind to its possessor. You are one of those favoured beings,

and those who know you will agree with me in awarding affection and respect to your many and varied excellencies. While your elegance and acquirements captivate the eyes, your words touch the heart; and he who can listen unmoved to your observations can have no power of appreciating the beauty of morality, or the surpassing loveliness of religion. Persevere, my dear Arthur, in the course you have so long and so nobly followed; and though, as is the case with every public man, the soundness of your views may be doubted, all will acknowledge the rectitude of your intentions.

"These pages are especially due to you. But for your unwearied patience, their author would still have led a life of frivolity and dissipation, and the name you so much adorn have been disgraced by one of your relatives. That you may long continue to exercise similar power over the minds of men, and in every respect to approve yourself a Christian, not only in name, but in deed, is,

"My dear cousin,

"The most earnest and sincere wish of

"Your ever attached relative and friend,

"ALFRED WILLIAM LECLERC."

Gertrude read portions of the book; it was a theological work, and, in some measure resembled Lord Lyttelton's celebrated work, 'Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul.' Such a description of reading was not likely to interest her, and she threw it from her, lest, by feeling the force of its reasoning, she should be compelled to acknowledge the truth of its positions.

CHAPTER VIII.

"WELL, Westropp, you have found your way here at last," said the Lieutenant's noble uncle, as his nephew introduced himself.

"I should not have come now, my lord, had not you sent for me."

"High time, too, sir; when your affairs, as well as yourself, are going to destruction."

Mr. E. turned hastily round; decanters were on the table, he poured out some brandy, and, when he had drunk it, said, "Now I will listen to what you have to say."

"You owe £5000 for debts of honour, as you men of fashion style your gambling transactions, and your other debts amount to £15,000 or £18,000: how do you mean to live, and pay them, out of an income of £1500 a year?"

"I never thought about it."

"I believe you, sir; but how will you like an arrest? and I understand your tailor will wait no longer. Do not imagine that you will prevail upon me to pay the money. I am so incensed with you

that, if the baroness were dead, I would marry to-morrow, and I would disappoint your expectation of being my heir; and that you never shall be in anything I can help; you shall not have a shilling of my personal property."

"Well, my lord."

"Well, sir; do you think that, if your ancestors had lived in this way, you would have had so much money to play with? no, faith! your estates would have passed to some Jew money-lender, and your family-seat have been the abode of some money-making citizen. For shame, for shame! How have you lowered yourself and your family. If you loved her, why did you not marry this unhappy girl; her father's family was pretty tolerable, and as to her mother's, notwithstanding their absurdities, there are many worse."

"My lord, would you have given your consent?"

"Would you have asked it, sir, unless you pleased? you would have married her, had you chosen. But this is all nonsense, you cannot marry her now. Listen to me, Westropp, you must marry Lady Louisa."

"No," said the Lieutenant, rising.

"Sit down, sir; if you obey me, I will pay your debts, and then you can settle what you like on Miss M. and her child. Her ladyship will not credit a word to your prejudice, and her father is perfectly agreeable to her union with you; what objection can you have?"

"I own that Lady Louisa is amiable, but I never

will resign Gertrude ; I know her, I know, too, that her headstrong passions would lead her to some fatal excess."

"I dare say ; but remember, you are inextricably involved, and you have my assistance only on my own terms. You are well nigh thirty-three now, Westropp, and it is high time that you led a decent life."

"Good night, my lord ;" said the Lieutenant, putting on his hat. "I will willingly obey you in all respects but this."

In spite of all his faults, the peer was attached to Mr. E. ; he called him back.

"Boy, I am an old man now, and though I never led a very irregular life, there are many things on which I cannot think with pleasure ; take my advice, give over these excesses : in the hours of pain and sickness, the remembrance of a misspent life increases the corporeal agony we endure. Listen to me ; many a respectable family in her own rank of life would receive that poor girl, and treat her kindly, too ; in quiet obscurity she would be far happier than in leading the heartless life she now does. Louisa has been attached to you, ever since she knew what affection was ; do, dear West—"

"Stop, my lord ; I cannot comply with your wishes, I cannot make Gertrude more unhappy, and for ever destroy the peace of a lady so amiable as I confess Louisa is."

"Take your own road, sir ; but mind, do not ester me."

Mr. E. returned no answer; after walking the room several times, he flung to the door, and left the house.

- The warnings he received did not stop his profuse expenditure; he believed his pecuniary concerns irretrievable, and he did not care how much worse they became. Gertrude had placed her child with a decent female, who lived at Mortlake, and the Lieutenant, who had not seen him for some weeks, determined to spend a day there. Gertrude refused to go, and, much irritated with her, he went alone.

"Your name is Ellison, sir;" said a rough looking man, as he stopped him on Westminster-bridge.

"What if it is, what is your business with me?"

"You are my prisoner, sir; at the suit of Mr. Supple, for £587."

With Lieutenant E. it was generally the blow first, and the word afterwards, but the sheriff's officer was not so easily shaken off, and Mr. E. was quickly secured.

"All this blustering is of no use," said the man; "settle the account."

Mr. E. could not do so, but he would write to his uncle. He received a laconic reply, 'You know the terms.' The Lieutenant raved with passion; what would Gertrude think of his absence, and how would her haughty spirit brook a repetition of such occurrences? perhaps, at that very moment, she might be subjected to the insults of the most brutal set of men in existence. Some of his other credi-

tors might perhaps take advantage of his incarceration, to enforce their demands, and she be exposed to every species of insult. Her very haughtiness would excite the derision of the uncouth beings around her, and how would she submit to their taunts! She might be compelled even to quit her apartments, and her ornaments and apparel become their prey.

"Enough! enough!" said the Lieutenant, striking his forehead; "my lord, your wishes shall be complied with, and if Lady Louisa regret her fate, she may blame you for it. While I am in existence Gertrude, the fortune of all who are, or may be, my relatives, shall but minister to your comfort. Give me writing materials;" they were brought, and the Lieutenant scrawled the words, 'Extricate me, and I will obey you.' The peer, in consequence, came himself.

"Before I give any promise, you must give me your word of honour; you pass it freely to the scoundrels of the gaming-table and the prize-ring, and I expect you will not deny it me."

"Very well; upon my honour, I will marry Lady Louisa, or a negress if you like."

"Now," said the peer, "you act like a ——"

"Villain, my lord? I purposely left a moral poison, to infect a pure mind, and I am now going to render an excellent woman miserable."

"Take care," said his lordship, "that I do not sue out a commission of lunacy against you; no one that saw you now would vouch for your sanity,

and a hundred of your friends would testify of your mad acts."

"Oh God! that I was mad! Then should I be at peace!"

The peer shuddered. What a state of mind must that be when the deprivation of reason is looked upon as a blessing! He half relinquished his design; but, for years, he had wished his favourite the wife of Westropp; he thought it impossible she could be so without changing the conduct of the husband; her perfect rectitude, and her sweetness of temper, would, he thought, have great influence upon him. The baron's dearest wish was to see his nephew worthy of the rank which one day would be his; and, to accomplish that wish, he had tried every means but the right. While his lordship had spoken of the obligations of his rank, of his duty to his family, he had never named his duty towards God. He had given him advice, but he had never attempted to reform the heart; and he failed in his endeavours because, while attacking the effects, he left the cause untouched.

The officer readily accepted Lord L—'s promise to see the debt discharged, and the nobleman led the way to his carriage.

"Cavendish square," said the footman, as he closed the door.

"No, my uncle, I cannot see Louisa to-night."

"I have given my orders, Westropp."

Mr. E. threw himself back in the carriage, and, in a few minutes, it stopped at the marquis's residence.

Lady Louisa was neither beautiful nor accomplished; but it was impossible to look on her sweet features, or listen to her melodious voice, without confessing that she possessed an indescribable power of charming. She was now in her twenty-seventh year, and had been in England five years. The marquis, her father, had been appointed to a high station in India, and, when she was sixteen, she accompanied her family there. In England, Westropp and his sisters were her companions, and, in the midst of oriental splendour, she never forgot them. It was not to be supposed that the only daughter of a wealthy and high-born nobleman would want admirers; and repeated proposals were made to the marquis. Louisa's unvarying negatives surprized and irritated him; but he was too much attached to her to be long angry, and Lady Louisa remained unmarried. Government business and his own health rendered it necessary for his lordship to revisit England; and the gaiety with which his daughter superintended the preparations for their departure recalled to his mind the reluctance which she manifested to depart from England and the Ellisons.

Lady Louisa was good and gentle; but, on one point, she cherished a fatal vanity. Conscious of her own attachment to her early friend, she believed others must perceive it; and she attributed much that was said of the lieutenant to envy, and a wish to prejudice her against him. That he might keep a mistress, Lady Louisa did not disbelieve; but she

would not credit the story that he had drawn her from the paths of virtue. As Dr Moore expresses it, 'she was ambitious of the honour of reforming a libertine.' She thought, with Lord L—, that if she was with him she should be able to convince him of the folly of his conduct, and that he would see his errors, and correct them. Since her return to England, she had only seen Mr. E. once, and that was in Kensington Gardens, where he was walking with Capt. Harvey and some brother officers. His low bow showed that he recognized her, and she attributed his distance to the fact of his being engaged. Mr. E. had never claimed his house in Bruton-street, and, when Lady Louisa visited his sisters there, she said, 'How is it I do not see Westropp?' 'Oh,' exclaimed the lively Caroline, 'Westropp is at Portsmouth, on professional business;' and this satisfied her. But Maria Ellison would not deceive her, though she failed in convincing her friend that the lieutenant was the reprobate she painted him.

"Here, Louisa," said Lord L—, as he presented Mr. E. to her, "I have brought you the prodigal son."

Her ladyship smiled. "You have been a long time finding out where Cavendish Square was, Mr. Ellison."

Mr. E. answered her by saying, "How did you like India, Louisa?"

"Oh, very well; the heat agreed very well with my tropical constitution. I can now scarcely endure England and its fogs."

"Did you know Lieut.-Col. Leclerc?"

"Yes, very well; his daughters and I were very great friends. Sarah married one of my papa's wards, and Clara came, with her mother and brother, to England. Mr. Leclerc, I understand, led a very dissipated life at college, and almost broke his mother's heart; but he is quite changed within these five years past. He has been ordained, has written several creditable works, and went back, about four years ago, to officiate as a clergyman of the Established Church, and I hear he is much respected by the men under his father's command."

"He and I were fellow collegians."

"So he said."

"What did he say of me?" inquired Mr. E. hastily. Lady Louisa was silent.

"Can you not tell me?"

"He told me, Westropp, that you were a complete profligate; that your reformation would be a work beyond the power of mortal to effect."

"Well, believe him, Louisa."

And had she believed him, her Ladyship would have been right; but the sentence appeared to her to be self-accusatory, therefore extenuative; and she entered into a lively conversation with Lord L—.

"Where in the world have you been?" demanded Gertrude, when Mr. E. appeared, after an absence of five days.

"Paying my debts, Gertrude; it is no use to conceal the truth, so I may as well tell you that I was

arrested, and was forced to send to my uncle to procure my release ; as his lordship would only effect it on his own terms, I could not write to you."

" Had you not left in a passion, I should have been seriously uneasy, and your explanation is not very agreeable. Arrested!" and her dark eyes flashed with passion.

" It is the truth ; and I have promised my uncle to accompany him for three months. Where will you stay while I am gone ?"

" When are you going ?"—

" O not this two months : he has given me that time to investigate and settle all my outstanding obligations : but he wishes me to dine in Portland Place more often than I have done."

" I suppose his lordship thinks he has bought your company dear enough. These French milliners have teased me for the bill I owe them."

" How much is it ?"

" One hundred and eighty-six pounds."

" They would be well paid if they had the third of it : these trades-people always take care to charge enough ; so, in case of failure, if they get five or eight shillings in the pound on bills of £3 or £400, they do not lose much. The present system of high prices and long credit is pernicious."

" You are in a very mercantile mood ; had you been east of Temple Bar I should not have wondered."

" In these days, Gertrude, there is little difference : how would the De-Monthermis and Fitz Eustaces of the olden time blush at the degeneracy of the

present age, when the Davis's, Wilsons, Butchers, and so forth, find a place in our palaces and courts!"

Gertrude laughed, and the Lieutenant proceeded to comment upon persons and things in the same strain. He knew he dare not mention his projected marriage, and he dreaded the scene he should have when it had taken place. He wished her to go into the country, but, as she refused, he did not press the request; and he employed every means to keep her ignorant of his intentions.

The day before that fixed for his marriage he called upon the newsman who supplied Miss M. with papers, and requested him not to send her that number of the paper in which his union with Lady Louisa would be reported. It frequently happens that the precaution taken to conceal a thing actually reveals it: when Gertrude rang for the newspaper, and was told it had not been sent, her anger was excessive, and she ordered her footman to go for it. The man returned with the information that it was sold.

"What does he mean by such insolence!" said Gertrude: "he shall never send me any other article. Get me a paper, do not return without one."

As she spoke, she threw her purse on the table, and, after the lapse of two hours, he brought her the Times, which was the only one he was able to procure. Gertrude took the Morning Post, and she was so convulsed with passion that it was sometime before she was able to discern a letter. Had the paper been sent as usual, she most pro-

hably would not have looked at it; now her caprice prompted her to do what she never had done before—to read it through. In the Parliamentary intelligence the name of Mr. Leclerc was conspicuous, and Gertrude inflicted a dreadful punishment upon herself while she perused his speeches; his words recalled to her memory what she had been, and she did not need the pompous announcement of Mr. Ellison's marriage to make her wretched. Her eyes rested upon the advertisement until the letters appeared to move, and she laid down the paper scarcely conscious of what she did. A book was on the table, and she snatched it up to obtain a momentary relief from perusing it, it was Goethe's pernicious work, 'The Sorrows of Werter;' and as Miss M. read it, she determined to follow the example of its hero.

"This," she said bitterly, "is the consistent Mr. E. I have had to-day an instance of what I have to expect; already neglect is manifested towards me, and my tradesmen will dare to insult me. Three months at the seat of your uncle. Oh, you liar! but you shall not have an opportunity of mocking me."

Mr. E. had given her £100, but she had many ways of spending money, and £40 were all that remained. She was indebted to a straw-bonnet maker, a woman in humble life, for several articles she had of her. Gertrude parcelled £39. 19., and then dressed herself without the assistance of her maid. She gave the money to the female, who answered her loud knock, and deliberately walked

into a chemist's shop ; the young man refused to serve her the poison she asked for, although she assigned a very specious reason for requiring it.

"I am afraid, ma'am, you want to destroy yourself."

Gertrude walked out, without answering him : as she hastened on, her agitated looks drew attention.

"How now, you gazing fools," she passionately exclaimed, as some officers of the Foot Guards impeded her progress : "you see Gertrude Manvers, what more do you want to know ?"

"By Jupiter, Ellison's mistress ; let me see you home," said the elder one, obtrusively offering his arm.

Gertrude almost flew by, and stopped not till she reached Vauxhall bridge. Her purpose was fixed, and she lingered by until the passengers ceased to cross it in numbers. The evening was cold, and drizzling rain made every one anxious to reach his home. Gertrude looked at the clouded sky, and thought of her relatives : nearly five years had elapsed since she quitted them, and, during that time, she had never heard any thing of them. She had occasionally sent a £10 note through the post-office to her grandmother, and her faults and her mother's now filled her brain. "To Mrs. Lumley all my errors are chargeable—there is no other world, or God would judge her." As she spoke, she laid her hand on the lamp post of the centre arch, and threw herself over.

Two gentlemen had been enjoying the pleasures

of the water. "I do not think this rain will continue long," observed the elder; "draw your oars we will remain under the arch, the tide will run stronger in half an hour."

The younger one assented, and, while the rowers were drinking some brandy which had been given them, he kept his eye on the boats passing and repassing. He heard the splash when Gertrude fell, and saw her extended pelisse floating on the water, he was an expert swimmer, and, before the men were aware of what had occurred, he had returned with the apparently lifeless body.

"Row to shore, my lads, a guinea to him that exerts himself most."

In a few minutes, Gertrude was conveyed to a public house, and every means tried to restore animation. In a short time she respired, and, after the lapse of an hour, became perfectly conscious. When told she was so, the younger gentleman entered the room where she was. Gertrude had been very violent, and was seated on a sofa, half dressed, she had drawn a large shawl over her neck, and was demanding her bonnet when he entered.

"This," said a woman who had attended her, "is the gentleman who saved you." He turned pale, and Miss M. hastily said,

"So you saved me, Mr. Leclerc; I thank you not."

Mr. Leclerc sat down, he was too much shocked to speak: when he rescued her from drowning, he had not time to observe her features, and, though

he feared she was the same when he afterwards saw her, he was not convinced until she spoke.

"Do not offer to prevent me," said Gertrude, attempting to leave the room, "no one shall stay me, and least of all you. I want, I will receive, no eleemosynary offerings."

Mr. Leclerc placed his back to the door, and held her feverish hands in his own, as he said,

"Miss Manvers, although many years have elapsed since I saw you, I was until very lately ignorant of your situation; had I known it, I would gladly have availed myself of the knowledge I possessed of you to withdraw you from it; I can guess what has led to the attempt upon your life, which I have been fortunately the instrument of frustrating. You will not give me, I trust, any occasion to use coercive measures; nor will you reject my endeavours for your future welfare. I shall leave you now, you must have additional medical advice."

Gertrude's rage and despair gave place to deep, but silent, sorrow; she suffered Mr. L. to seat her on the sofa, and, when the medical practitioner visited her, he found her weeping bitterly; the voice that for long had been a stranger to her ears had not lost its power on her heart, and the tones of Mr. L. recalled her childhood to her memory. She forgot her youth and its fevered and guilty excitement, and thought only of the happy period of her life when she was permitted to associate with Mr. L. and his mother. In the bitterness of real anguish, she regretted that she could no longer

do so ; from one she was separated by death, and from the other by—her own misconduct. The mistress of Westropp Ellison could never again be the friend of Arthur Leclerc.

It so happened that Mr. Parker, the surgeon who before attended her was the person now employed, but he did not recognize his patient : the splendid material of her dress, and the elegant ornaments she wore, bore as little resemblance to her apparel then, as her person did to the beautiful girl by whom his attention had been required. Gertrude was sadly altered ; her features had lost their delicacy, and the profuse and unwonted use of white paint had totally changed the natural clearness of her complexion. Her skin was sallow, and in some parts shrivelled by the heating cosmetics she had applied. Had she believed, what she was often told, that neither her figure nor her face required mending, she would not have spoilt them both, by ridiculously trying to improve what nature had made perfect. She had learnt, too, to use scents in abundance, and, though Lieutenant Ellison expressed his dislike of them, it made little difference. "I choose it," was generally her reply ; and the lieutenant too much feared she would put her threats in execution, to irritate her by continued opposition. In every respect, she was so changed that Mr. P. had not the most remote idea of her identity, and he prescribed for her, without presuming to ask any questions.

After a very long sleep, Gertrude awoke, and

found herself in an apartment differing in its furniture and ornaments from the one to which she had been first conveyed. She had some suspicion that an opiate had been administered, and determined to rise, and ascertain where she was. A young female, who seemed to be placed there to attend upon her, did not offer any resistance, and assisted her to dress. Gertrude walked to the window, the grounds had undergone some alteration, still she could not be deceived, she was in Mr. Leclerc's villa at Richmond. She placed her hands on her throbbing temples, and vainly endeavoured to compose her spirits; her heart beat violently, and her emotion impeded the free passage of the breath, as she tried to question the girl respecting her removal there. She took some hartshorn and water, which the young woman gave her, and slowly said,

"Where is Mr. Leclerc?"

"In the library, ma'am."

"I must see him."

The girl opened a door which led to a sitting-room.

"Mr. L. said, ma'am, this was for you, when you might want to see him."

Gertrude told her to go to him, but the girl apparently had her instructions. She rung, and when the aged and respectable housekeeper answered her summons, she requested her to inform Mr. L. that Miss M. wished to see him. He came immediately, but not alone. He was accompanied by a reverend and venerable looking gentleman, whom Gertrude

had seen before, and whom she recognised as the Rev. Dr. M——, the president of the college of which Mr. L. had been a student. Conscious as she was of her own faults, she thought others must wish to lecture her upon them, and the idea that Dr. M—— had come to reprove her, shot like lightning through her brain. She had too often been swayed by the impulse of the moment: she had become an atheist, from yielding to the conviction of the moment, and, when she had formed an opinion, her false pride would not allow her to relinquish it. She rose hastily, and, with much of her usual haughtiness, vehemently said,

“Why have you, Mr. L., brought Dr. M—— with you, it will be useless to preach to me.”

“I hope not,” said the Doctor, gravely; “but your alarm is uncalled for; I am not going to preach to you now, whatever I may do at a future time. At present I have come to converse with you on secular matters.”

Dr. M. was one of those to whom Goldsmith's description of a clergyman might be justly applied, excepting only his high clerical and University rank; a few years preceding, he was the Vice Chancellor of the Establishment, and the expiration of his year of office was much regretted by those over whom he had presided. Gertrude had seen him at a fashionably attended church in the metropolis, where he occasionally officiated, during the Christmas vacation. She had seen him once at the villa, but he was then conversing with Mr. L., in his

dressing-room, and did not join the dinner party. Mildness ever moderates passion. Gertrude answered invective with invective, and opposed violence to reprimand; but expostulation and gentleness subdued her temper, and she turned away to conceal the tears which the Doctor's mild reply had drawn from her eyes.

"I wish to ask you some questions, Miss M. Was not the maiden name of your mother Rosine Jones? the daughter of Philip and Louisa Jones."

"Yes, sir; it was."

"Are you aware whose child Mr. Jones was?"

"No, sir; I have heard that he was the natural son of a very great man, but his name I never learnt; I considered the recollection disgraceful, and strove to forget it."

The Doctor looked at Mr. L., and then said, "Your grandfather's parent was my elder brother; his son died a short time since, at an advanced age, and has left no heir but myself. My life is approaching its termination, and I find myself in the possession of £6000 a year, and no relative to inherit it, when I am, as I soon shall be, removed from this world, I hope, to a better. Illegitimate children are always harshly used, and most wrongly are they so: their very unfortunate situation calls for additional kindness, but they receive the insults of the world, and are neglected even by those who have placed them in their miserable situation. My brother provided well for your grandfather, and he had every reason to do so, his mother was his ward,

and he shamefully ill-treated her; she died very young, and, when he married, I was sent to college, and never had any opportunities of learning any more of Mr. Jones. My brother's pursuits alienated him from me, he would not brook a remonstrance from a boy who had been left to his care, and I thought it incumbent upon me to offer some observations upon his conduct; we continued upon speaking terms, and that was all. My brother died forty years since, and his son, then a young man, came into possession of his estates and papers; by his late decease, they have passed to me, and, looking over the latter, I found detailed accounts of what had been done for your grandfather, letters from him on the subject of his marriage with a respectable female."

"Yes," said Gertrude, interrupting the Rev. Doctor, "but who, that did not know it, would believe that Mrs. Jones is the daughter of a gentleman?"

"From the account I have heard of her, few would," continued the Doctor; "but my brother's papers informed me what were her connexions; there were letters from a Charlotte Jones, acknowledging the receipt of a set of books, and thanking my brother for them; who was she?"

"My mother's second sister; she died many years before I was born."

"I went through the whole of them, and gleaned sufficient information of the Jones's to direct me where to find the surviving branches of the family, for whom it was my intention to provide."

Gertrude started ; the Doctor went on. " I have said that I thought natural children harshly treated, and I determined to be no party to depriving the descendants of one of property, when there were no other claimants. I lost, in early life, a young lady to whom I was much attached, and I never knew another whose influence was sufficiently strong to counterbalance the advantages I have derived by remaining unmarried. For money I could not persuade myself to marry, and, even if I had, I must have resigned considerable emoluments ; connexion I did not want, and rank was no substitute for the amiable friend of whom I was deprived. I therefore rejected the alliances into which I might have entered, and, excepting Mr. Leclerc, there is no person living for whom I cherish a particular regard. I had a great deal of wealth, and while there were any who directly, or indirectly, could claim affinity to me, I could not prevail upon myself to bequeath it to charities, as I had seen numerous instances of neglect and mismanagement. I therefore determined to provide for such of the children of Mr. Jones as might be living, and to give the residue of my estate to Mr. L., for various purposes, which I intended to specify. I thought that, among six children, and their descendants, there would be some worthy of the change in their station, but I have been grievously disappointed."

" With respect to me, I suppose so," said Gertrude, haughtily, " but what is wrong with my cousins ?"

"They are the wives of city swindlers and creditor-duping tradesmen, unfitted by their conduct for any situation but the contemptible one they fill. The examination and remand, by the commissioner, of the husband of the eldest, appeared in the papers of Tuesday week."

"I am not sorry for it," said Gertrude; "they never treated me well."

"Why did you give them cause of treating you ill? I have been horrified by the tales told me of you. I could not have believed such gross profligacy existed, had not your mode of life afforded incontrovertible evidence of the truth of the charges made against you. That a female of nineteen should deny the existence of a God, and should make that denial the excuse for a life of immorality, appeared to me altogether incredible. My experience of human nature has been sufficiently melancholy, but I could not believe that a young, well-educated, and talented, female could so act—could so strangely forget even what was due to herself. I discovered great, very great, faults in your mother; her conduct was, I saw, far from right; and I thought the statement she had made of yours much exaggerated. I knew enough of Lieut. E.'s way of passing his time to know where to find him; and, when I did, I could not accuse any one of having misrepresented you. I felt too much grieved to seek an interview with you then, nor did I think that anything I might have said would have had any effect upon you. I came here, sure of meeting

with that sympathy my blasted hopes required, and, from Mr. L., I learnt some particulars which increased the interest I felt for you. Until I named you, he did not know how you were situated; and my information made him anxious to ameliorate your condition; for neither of us could suppose it an agreeable one."

"You were deceived," said Gertrude, coolly (she did not speak sincerely). "I thank you, sir, for your kind intentions, and can only say that, if they had been formed some few years since, they might have prevented that conduct you are pleased to deplore. Now, I do not intend that any one shall dictate life, or the mode of it, to me."

"I seldom employ dictation; but to warn, to exhort, to instruct, to reprove, to use every means human skill can suggest, I solemnly promised before God, in the presence of his servants. For forty-five years I have made them instrumental to the amendment of others; and shall I lay them aside when a descendant of my own and only brother is madly treading the path of absolute and irremediable ruin? No; I have claimed you as a relation, and I intend to exert the privilege of such; and according to your behaviour will your situation be. You are young; and, though those laws which custom and propriety impose upon mankind will prevent your entrance into general society, they will not forbid your receiving many comforts. In a retired village, where neither your temptations nor your errors are known, you may pass through life

with tranquillity, and prove, by your penitence, your sorrow for your faults. Mr. Leclerc and I determined to see you, and to offer you an asylum from the coming storm. Was it not the announcement of Mr. Ellison's marriage that led you to attempt self-destruction?"

Gertrude nodded; she could not trust herself to speak, for fear of betraying her emotion.

"My supposition, then, was right. Two months back, Mr. L. endeavoured to see you; but you were constantly denied, and the only method we could fix upon was to watch you home, and insist upon seeing you. Mr. L.'s engrossing public duties prevented his doing so, and my efforts were fruitless; I could not follow you to your places of resort, and your irregular hours made my attempts to see you abortive. I then resolved to seek an interview with Lieut. Ellison, and to request him to introduce me to you. Had he refused, I intended to inform Lord L— of his conduct. Mr. E. was, I found, at the seat of his uncle, and, in the high circles, it was rumoured that he was about to be united to Lady Louisa, the daughter of a celebrated nobleman with whom I was formerly well acquainted. When Mr. Leclerc recognized you, and informed me who you were, I immediately requested him to allow you to be conveyed here. He at once acquiesced, and the surgeon, by my directions, infused a soporific into your medicine."

"I thought so; why was it done?"

"I will tell you," said Mr. Leclerc. "You were

at first so violent that, in conjunction with Dr. M., I feared you would try to evade us, and, perhaps, excite observation by your incoherence and emotion. When you are more composed, I have much to say to you; but, as I can perceive that Dr. M.'s communication has greatly agitated you, I will defer my remarks to a later period. One observation of yours I will reply to. You said, 'I will not accept eleemosynary offerings.' Will you regard the proffered kindness of Dr. M. in that light? Will your fatal pride induce you to reject his and my plans for your future peace? Will you prefer a life of abandonment to one of mediocrity and calmness?"

Gertrude waved her hand impatiently. "Pray cease, and do not distract me—I never felt so ill in my life. Leave me; for mercy's sake, leave me."

Mr. L. and his friend complied with her wish, but, much to her dissatisfaction, she found herself under the observation of the young female whom she first saw. Gertrude several times endeavoured to fix her attention on other objects, but the girl was strict to her duty; and, completely exhausted, Miss M. suffered her to introduce the physician whom Mr. L. had sent for. But, although physicians may cure the material frame, it was never yet known that they could heal the mind; and, with so many occurrences and reflections to torment her's, it was no wonder that the prescriptions of the medical gentleman failed in their wished-for effect.

Gertrude had long known that Mr. L. was un-

married. Who the lady was of whom his servant spoke, she was ignorant—that she was not his wife many circumstances had convinced her. She could not believe that Dr. M. would sport with the truth; and the idea of what she might have been entirely overpowered her. The acknowledged relation of Dr. M., and by his bounty placed in a situation for which she was fitted by nature and education, and in which she would have enjoyed the society of Mr. L., and that of those estimable persons with whom she associated, she knew she must have been happy. Her varied talent would have been appreciated, and might have contributed to the peace and happiness of the eccentrically good Dr. M. She might have had the pleasure of lightening his hours of pain and care by her assiduity, and her kindness and gratitude might have soothed the last hours of her benefactor: and Mr. Leclerc—the unattached, the unmarried, Mr. Leclerc—he, too, might have confessed the power of her fascination, and yielded to the spell which she could, when she pleased, fix upon her auditory. All this might have been, would have been, had not her errors—errors which the moralist never will, and which society, for its own good, never can, overlook—have banished her from a participation in the advantages offered to her family by Dr. M.—and what a reward for his certainly original kindness!—

Gertrude grew worse; her constitution was never robust, and the violent passions she had indulged had considerably enervated it, before her immersion

in fresh water, while labouring under excited feelings, and with a fevered frame, had given the last blow to her failing strength. The remonstrances of the medical gentleman were listened to with contempt, and scornfully answered, the reproofs of Dr. M. had no effect upon her ; and even Mr. Leclerc lectured in vain.

“Talk of life to the great, the happy ; bid them enjoy it with their friends, and in their palaces—speak not of it to me. To the wretched, life is a burthen ; and death, death that is dreaded only by the dastard knave who fears a phantom power that in his life he defies, is the only refuge for the weary :—

‘Enough ; the grave is yawning for her dead,
To her dreamless sleep I shall soon be led,
And then, the wearied eye, and the aching head,
Will sweetly rest in her earthly bed.’

Go, Mr. Leclerc, preach life to those whom fortune favours, and whom friends caress ; tell them to cherish it, but ere long existence will sting them, as it as done me, and they will find it misery. Your poets call it vapour—so they will tell you of rustic innocence and peace—they delude—vapours are a fleeting mist, but life embodies all evils, and he who madly endures them deserves to feel them. You tell of another world—does its Judge delight in virtue ? if so, why are the humble oppressed, and why do the well-meaning meet disappointment ?”

“Miss M., you shock me, did not pity predominate, I could not listen to your dreadful defiance

of the Maker of all men. Who shall dictate to Him? in His wisdom He allots to every man."

Gertrude interrupted him:—"At least one of the maxims of the Book you call Sacred is 'Judge not:' hitherto you have all condemned me, as a wilful and preverse child of sin, one who sought destruction, and then gloried in her ruin. Mr. L. listen to me."

Gertrude then rapidly related the principal incidents of her life, and continued: "From the hour of my baptism, until I attained my eighth year, I never entered a church, nor was I taught any prayer, except the Lord's. I had some faint idea that it was offered to some Supreme, Magnificent Being, whom we were to obey; and, when I was six years old, I asked my ever lamented Father what 'trespasses' meant. Well do I remember his answer, they were almost the last words I ever heard him speak, and I still seem to feel his burning hand upon my head." Gertrude laid her hand on her own head. "I loved my father, he was a father; had he lived, your admonitions and expostulations, Mr. L., would not have been needed; but I was then too young, and his professional duties called him often from me: he took me when he visited his friends, and it was only at the regimental mess table, or the parlour of the tavern, that I could enjoy the company of my father. When I think, I wonder how he kept his senses: his brother officers had a home, and their children received a mother's care; but my parent was obliged to introduce his

child to places unfit for her, or he knew not but the daily bread she was taught to pray for might be denied her." Gertrude shuddered.

"Why, Miss M., did not your father take you from your mother?"

"Because he wished to have me under his own care. I was his sole surviving child, and the fate of the others had been a warning; he had placed two children with some woman and when he went to see them, one was lame, and the other appeared stupid: the wretch had given the infants gin, that, by becoming stupified, they might not disturb her; and the lameness was the result of the child's being confided to a girl who, intent upon her own purposes, neglected him, and allowed him to fall down the stairs, and, even when he complained, never took any notice of him. They both died. O that I had! Who, that knew anything of human suffering, would regret the death of infants! my father's was cruel kindness, he should have let me die too."

Mr. Leclerc suffered Gertrude to proceed, he was well acquainted with human nature, and he knew that, if her heart became softened by a remembrance of her father's love, the task he had undertaken would be less difficult.

She suddenly re-collected herself, and hastily said, "I told you I would repeat what my father said to me. 'Trespasses, my child, mean any offences we may commit against God, by neglecting our duties, or in any way violating His laws; and, in this short petition, we are taught that forgiving

those who have injured us is one ground on which we may ask God's forgiveness of our faults. Do you remember, Gertrude, when you cut the rosette of my sash, how angry I was, when you refused to tell me you did it? When you said you were sorry, and would not do so again, I told you I forgave you: now, had it been a great fault, and I had not forgiven you, how could I have sought forgiveness from that Heavenly Father against whom we all hourly offend? Forgive, from your heart, all who wrong you, and then, and not till then, repeat 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.' Shortly after this my father went abroad, and I never saw him more; I felt I had lost my dearest friend, but I was not able to understand that I had lost my best, and only real, guide. Mrs. Lumley never went to a church, she sometimes took me to the place of worship which she attended, but there I used to be frightened, and I can very well remember asking, if people went there to quarrel? Sometimes I thought it was a theatre, there were singers, and flutes, violins, and other musical instruments, and my attention was divided between them and the baize of the pew, which I amused myself by picking to pieces. The preacher was very fond of quoting poetry, and he generally suited the action to the word: once he said something about Desire fluttering her wings, and wishing to be gone; and, as persons of his persuasion wear no clerical garments, he supplied the deficiency by shaking his hand-

kerchief, and told his hearers that it was an emblem of the soul, which, restless and uneasy, beat against its material case, and would never be at peace until it was released from it. When we got home, I asked Mrs. Lumley how a handkerchief could represent two things at once; Desire fluttering her wings, and the soul rebelling against the body: a box on the ear was my answer, and I received a severe reprimand for laughing, but I could not help it, the contortions and gestures of the preacher were absolutely ridiculous."

"I fear there is too much truth in what you say, Miss M.," interrupted Mr. L.; "I do not mean to deny that there exists much sound learning, and great talent among the various dissenting preachers, who exercise their profession amongst us; neither do I mean to claim pre-eminence in utility, earnestness, or theology, for the members of the establishment; but I do mean to say that the majority of the latter possess them, while it is a minority of the former that are found able as willing to instruct those they wish to teach. It is said, and said truly, that immorality in a clergyman is as unpardonable as cowardice in a soldier: one flies from the foes of his king and country, the other justifies the enemies of his God; but, in a teacher of religion, ignorance and indiscreet zeal may prove nearly as noxious as vice itself. Extreme violence of language and manner excite the ridicule of the profane, and disgust the sensible, while people of a middle grade are alarmed at the effects of being religious, since it appears to make men either idiots or madmen."

“ You are right, Mr. Leclerc : the dislike I acquired of everything connected with public worship may be traced to the impropriety of manner and speech that characterized the person who officiated at the chapel where my mother attended. One morning she was more than usually severe, and, to escape her, I ran out of the house, and the church door being open, I went in, for I knew she would not follow me there ; and, when I looked about me, I wondered what people went there for, was it only to open books, and shut them again ? I had not one, and a pretty little girl offered me her's. I could read then, at eight, better than I did at nine, for, from want of practise, I forgot what I had learnt. I was tired, and wished myself out, when the last verses of the 24th Psalm were played. I was always very susceptible of the power of good music, and I was delighted with the words, and the way in which they were played. Whenever I could, I went, with the hope of hearing those beautiful verses again. When Mr. Dawson sent me and the servant regularly to Islington church, I began to understand what religion meant, and I could not fail to observe the great discrepancy there was in my mother's conduct and her professions ; I thought of my father's explanation, and remembered her manner. I have known her pray for hours, and then rise and indulge in the grossest language for the smallest fault ; were I to repeat the terms she used, and the occasions which she said justified them, you could not, you would not,

believe me. Still I was taught that God was good, and I believed it : I accustomed myself to regard all things as made by Him, and for that reason meriting the notice of all people. From London I was sent to Wales, and there again my thoughts tormented me ; the behaviour of the Signora and her sisters did not agree with their creed ; and, as I grew older, and more discriminating, I could never reconcile the morals of men with the system upon which they professed to form them. You alone, Mr. Leclerc, appeared to me to reduce principle to practice, yet there were contrarities in you which have often surprized me."

"I do not know why they should, Miss M. ; no one is perfect, and I have my full share of the corruptions of human nature."

"No ; you will scarcely guess to what I allude. I have heard you express your dissent to certain expressions and forms still retained in the Church of England, yet you complied with them."

"Certainly I did : I had no wish to become the leader of a party, or to place myself at the head of a sect, particularly where unimportant points of doctrine were the subjects in dispute. I might have thought it necessary to observe all the ceremonies of the Jewish ritual, as those of old did : would I have been justified in exciting the minds of my fellow countrymen, or in disturbing the settled order of things ?"

"But," said Gertrude, "do you believe the creed of St. Athanasius ? you do not believe in predesti-

nation, you hold rather latitudinarian opinions with respect to baptism, and, though you object to oaths, yet as a University student, and now as an M.P., you have taken them. By what casuistry can you explain this ?”

“ You have furnished me with an argument against yourself : if I believe the creed you named, possibly some one may deny that, and believe predestination, which I do not ; on the other hand, some declaim against Pede-baptism, and others, supporting that, decry oaths. I might go on multiplying examples to the end of time, but I have said sufficient to prove on what grounds I support the long established rules of our country : either there must be some general opinions held and subscribed to, or there must be none ; we, as it were, enter into an implied agreement to uphold all that is sanctioned by time and usage, reserving to ourselves the right of privately rejecting, or abiding by such propositions as we think best. Thus I should be glad to see the article of predestination and election expunged from our religious code ; I should wish that of baptism so far modified as to express that it is a sign of reconciliation between man and his God, and a pledge that, if we seek Him in our after life, we shall not seek in vain ; and I would willingly lend my aid towards the abolition of oaths, at least the majority of them. Those taken in Courts of Request, in the Custom House,* and in Police Offices, are, fifteen cases out

* His Grace the present Archbishop of Canterbury added much to his honour, and displayed his piety, in procuring the

twenty, perjuries ; and I speak advisedly when I say that in very few cases are they truly made ; but, notwithstanding this, I do not feel myself called upon to raise a civil commotion at this momentous period, by discussing questions which the majority of mankind is unable to comprehend, or to alarm the fears of the timid, by abolishing what they regard as their bulwarks and protectors against fraud and wrong. Most young men pay little attention to these things, but with me it was different. I was publicly known as an author, and it was, of course, supposed that I was acquainted with the subjects upon which I had written ; to the doctrine of predestination I alone absolutely object, but I could readily profess a general belief in all the others, trusting to the promise that I should have opportunities of acquiring information of them all. After copious explanations, and the most unwearied exertions on the part of Dr. M——, my opinions on the one subject remained unchanged, and I quitted the University, as I entered it, plain Arthur Leclerc. You have, after all, misjudged me, and your mistake shews how wrong it is for persons to draw hasty conclusions from any line of conduct ; the student assents to the general doctrines, the graduate is supposed to believe all. How you should know anything of these things surprises me, was Mr. Ellison your informant ?”

abolition of most of the Custom-house oaths, in 1830 : they were productive of a frightful system of perjury, and were merely laughed at by those who took them.

"Partly he was : but I will resume my explanation of the causes which have made me an infidel. When I returned to Mrs. Lumley, I endured scenes and treatment beyond the power of any one to conceive. I should but shock you, and outrage propriety, were I to attempt describing them : as to her husband, he was habitually inebriated, and his language was most gross and profane ; with my grandmother I could not associate, and none who knew the conduct of my relatives would admit me to their society. I was excluded from every innocent enjoyment, and in every pursuit I met disappointment. Among all I knew, Lieut. E. was the only person that treated me with common civility ; for some time he was most decorous and respectful towards me, and, when he threw off disguise, he did not try to deceive me ; but he was repulsed, and he left Mrs. Lumley's in a violent passion. Some of his books remained, and the difficulties that had perplexed me vanished when I read them : need I name C—— and the other eminent writers who have attacked religion ?"

"You need not ; I have perused their writings, and I will speak of them another time."

Gertrude continued : "I became almost a proselyte to their opinions, and the conduct of men fixed me in them. I listened to the contrary sentiments delivered by our Rector and his Curate ; at the meeting-house, and at the Catholic chapel, I again heard differing creeds, and I could not credit the mass of absurdities constituting the system which

each sectarian calls religion. At times, early recollections obtained the ascendancy; I was not completely an Atheist until I saw you at Windsor; your exclamation, 'What a set!' sunk deep into my heart."

"Stop an instant; I have something to say in my own vindication; I did not recognize you, Miss M., neither did I intend my remark to reach the ear of any of the party."

"I am aware of that, Mr. L.; one less accustomed to your voice would not have caught the import of your words: but how did you afterwards know I was one of the party?"

"You wore a remarkable dress; I saw you in it afterwards, in Hanover-square, and remembered that one of the Windsor party, of whom my cousin frequently spoke, had a similar one, and resembled the young lady who was once a great favourite of mine."

"Ah! once a favourite of yours; well, let that pass. That night I was annoyed by a creature in the shape of man, but I cannot find words to speak of him as he is; his name lately figured in the Police reports, and I know that, for cunning, fraud, and vileness, he cannot be surpassed; to escape him, I accepted the offered arm of Lieutenant E., who met me, and he amused me with tirades against everything and everybody; he spoke of your cousin, but as I did not know you had such a relation, I imagined he meant you, and I felt that, if you were a hypocrite, there could be no truth in

anything. I missed obtaining a situation with one of the loveliest, and, if I am not much deceived, one of the best, of women, but I was not discouraged, I applied for others. I was rejected—no one would patronize the daughter of such a woman as Mrs. Lunley. Before the death of Mr. L., I was not much affected by my disappointments, but, after that event, I felt them acutely: I was every day getting older, and I looked forward to the one on which I should be twenty-one as that which would emancipate me; but I found the small sum I did possess made away with, and I was left entirely dependent upon my mother. All my efforts were fruitless—I was continually taunted with my parentage: I found that in the eyes of the world to be unfortunate was to be criminal, and misery was regarded as a greater crime than guilt."

"Why," said Mr. Leclerc, "did you not apply to me? you knew my beloved mother was partial to you, and, for her sake, you might have supposed I should have been disposed to serve you."

"I wrote to you; I came myself, and could not see you."

"When! I never received any letter."

"No; I did not leave it, the footman named a Mrs. Leclerc, I thought, your wife."

"No, my aunt; but had I been married, what had that to do with it?"

"Much; you long since interested my feelings so greatly that I could not endure even the idea of seeing your wife."

"I am truly sorry, but my conscience acquits me; I never wished to gain your affections, and I must say that your conduct does not indicate that I had."

"Perhaps not, but I speak the truth. How would Mr. L. approve this, how would he scorn these people, were questions I was continually putting to myself. My situation would not have been so unbearable, had I not known it to be one in which I could never hope to see you: it doubtless appears astonishing that, with such feelings, I should quit it with Lieutenant E., but he was the only person that ever pitied my sufferings, and strove to alleviate them."

"Alleviate them! what, by plunging you——"

"Do not so greatly blame him: I had my choice: when Mrs. L. refused to receive me, I contradicted him no more, and I feel bound to speak the truth; whatever may have led to his marriage, I am convinced his attachment to me remains undiminished, so does mine to him, and I will not exist separated from him. So long as I believed a God, and worshipped him, so long as I loved virtue, I loved you, but when I ceased to acknowledge the one, and practise the other, then I ceased to love you, and Mr. E. occupied that place in my heart that you once did."

"With these sentiments, then, how can you blame Mr. E. for not marrying you?"

"Because he sought me, perseveringly, unremittingly, sought me; and, by leading me into error,

he has stained his own conscience. I would not, I have told him, I would not have become his wife, had he wished to make me so, when he first knew me. I was not then an unbeliever, and I could not have gone to the altar of God with one man, while my affections were given to another; but when, by unceasing assiduity, he made me like, I will not say love, him, I was at his disposal: he might have made me a kind and estimable companion, he did make me a wretched and miserable creature. I flew from one scene of disappointment to another, and eagerly plunged into every species of riot: a naval officer never wants companions, and the immorality of the service is certainly unquestionable; well may our sailors be the brutes they are, when their officers precede them in vice and folly. From the Admiral to the junior volunteer, all are infected with it, and how they can at all preserve discipline, has frequently surprized me. I have seen the senior Lieutenant, the first master and his mates, the Admiral's secretary and purser, all intoxicated together, and using language which far more degraded them than the persons to whom it was applied; and even the Captain had so far forgotten the eternal word 'discipline' as to join those who were breaking it. And yet, Mr. L., all these men were Christians, they would attend the Rev. Chaplain as demurely as Lord Nelson is said to have given orders for a general thanksgiving, though, like him, they had wives and mistresses too."

"What had you to do with that? you will not

be called upon to answer for their sins : much that you have advanced is not at all relevant, it is indeed an argument against yourself. If there are countless thousands who live viciously, let us not increase the number ; let us rather prove our good sense by separating ourselves from the guilty mass. I do not mean to deny that your trials have been very great, and I believe that very few, if any, would have acted otherwise than you have done. So far as regards myself, I can only say that I shall ever sincerely regret that any preference for me ever gave you a moment's uneasiness : your communication has equally surprised and afflicted me : as a young and interesting female, without proper protection, I certainly wished to contribute, as a friend, to your welfare. You will, perhaps, acknowledge that my behaviour never exceeded the limits of politeness and cordiality ; in fact, your extreme youth and my own feelings forbade any, the most remote, idea of any exclusive affection for you."

"Mr. L., I certainly acquit you. From the time that I met you in Wales, until I last parted from you, in the presence of your respected mother, you never manifested any other regard than that you have mentioned ; and it was not until my senseless grand-mother tormented me that I myself was aware of the motive which induced me, haughtily, to reject those who, according to my station, were thought eligible husbands for me. I had ever warm affections, and they have been constantly crushed ; my relations I could not love, and those

I did I did not dare to tell so: it is now a matter of little importance, the grave will soon close upon me, and my oppressions and my faults will be alike forgotten."

"In this world, perhaps they will; but, Gertrude, I will not deceive you: I do think that your life is very precarious; calmness of mind and proper attention may do much, and time may possibly restore you to health; but this is uncertain, all that we can calculate upon surely is death; and do not be impatient while I try to convince you that there is another state of existence."

"Do not, Mr. L., touch on that subject; I will not believe it; do withdraw, I am now quite exhausted."

CHAPTER IX.

“Now,” said Mr. L., when he visited her the succeeding day, “now I will convince you how erroneous are the ideas by which you say you will abide. Pride is denounced in Scripture: you cherished this passion before you left the Signora; under its influence you declined to own your real condition to Mrs. L., and offended both her and me by your cool note and the cessation of your visits. It was not my mother’s place to seek you; and, as her health became hourly worse, my thoughts were too much engaged by her to dwell on you, and, when they did, I felt your conduct indicative of contempt, undeserved and uncalled for. If you felt the loss of our society an evil, it was one which you brought upon yourself: here then is one proof of the justice of God. He forbids pride, and punishment was consequent upon your indulging it. We are taught, too, never to let our eyes rest on anything that may inflame the passions, and we are commanded to shun every thing that may hurt the mind. Had you obeyed these precepts, you would not have read those detestable books, you would have thrown them from you with horror, and you would have

remained uncontaminated by their guilt. As you do not enter into their theories of atoms, organization, and such other abstruse subjects, I need not confute them; but, as you have read most Atheistical and Deistical writings, it is not necessary for me to quote one to contradict the other. I ask you, and I trust you will answer me truly, did you not find numberless inconsistencies in their pages? Did not one axiom confute the other, even when both were the production of the same author?"

"Yes; but they so showed the general improbability of Scripture History, and the impossibility of many occurrences, that I overlooked their occasional discrepancies."

"This is the base sophistry of our nature: you will be indulgent to sceptics, to those who wish to place you on a level with the earth upon which you tread; yet you will not excuse the apparent contradictions of the Bible. I say, apparent, because he that will take the trouble of comparing one passage with another, and the translation with the original, will find that no contradictions exist."

"How was I, who never saw a Greek or Hebrew letter, to compare one with the other?"

"Why then presume to judge? was it, to strengthen the Poet's remark, that 'A little learning is a dangerous thing?' Most cavillers are those who have the least acquaintance with the matter they doubt. The received translation is a good one, and I should be sorry to see it altered; innovations of all kinds are attended with danger, and to change the words of the English Bible would be to commit an irreparable error; but there are many passages obscurely rendered, and, in some,

the sense is partly changed: this renders instruction in the dead languages an absolute constituent in the education of the clergy; and from the want of that sound information have sprung half the sects and absurdities which have perplexed the world. The copious notes, which are given in our new editions, must prove very acceptable and useful to the unlearned reader, and are quite explanatory enough in all things regarding faith, morals and practice. Few persons are, by nature, fitted for controversialists, and those who have figured as such had better have remained in oblivion: religious disputes are never productive of good, they are carried on in a spirit of acrimony and partisanship, which is altogether at variance with Christianity itself; and which would, ere now, have overthrown it, had it not been based on immutable truth. I speak not of defensive polemics; when our faith is attacked, it is our duty to support it; but no one ought to enter lightly into a doctrinal warfare. I have spoken on these points before, and I will say that one system of scepticism is contrary to another, and to the evidence of our senses. Materialists will argue on many subjects, and such of them as are medical will tell you that they can find in the human body no indication of any spiritual life, differing from the animal existence of the brutes. We consider the absence of the animating spirit to produce the appearance which we call death; if then, the vital spark be gone, how can we expect to find it in the lifeless corpse? We cannot anatomize a living body, and a dead one is so because life, that is the soul, has departed; and yet, with singular fatuity, we search for it in its forsaken

case. You may tell me that the appearances of animals and men are the same after death, so are those of plants after their decay, yet some of them annually revive, while the others perish entirely; and such may be the case with animals and men. Further, I would observe that it is by no means certain that animals do not possess a spirit, distinct from, but in some manner approaching, the human soul. This opinion has been entertained by many eminent men, and some circumstances would appear to strengthen it. I may be asked, if they are immortal and are to experience a resurrection, how is it possible to collect their scattered fragments? the flesh that has been used for a variety of purposes, and the bones which have undergone multi-form changes. Now, if they possess spirituality, I do not think they will resume their earthly forms: such an opinion is subversive of the sentence, 'At whose coming all men shall rise with their bodies to give account;' because we do not suppose that they possess an instinctive consciousness of right and wrong, therefore they have no occasion to account for their deeds. But, admitting that they are to undergo the changes I believe man will, can we doubt that He, who formed them first, wants power to connect them in any shape He pleases? Really, some men would teach us that, having formed the world, the Creator became subject to the creature, and was controlled in the operations of His power by the beings to whom He had given existence."

"Then you are a disciple of Pythagoras; you believe in the transmigration of souls?"

"Ridiculous! no, but I name these things to

dissipate your prejudices, and to prove how irreconcilable are the varying systems which materialists, atheists, polytheists, and their speculative brethren, would palm upon the world. The first admit substance in all; the second deny it in anything; the others worship many gods; and others again pay divine homage to several creations of their own brain, believing in one Supreme, and soliciting their ideal deities to intercede with Him for them. Now, to prove from your own life that there is a God, wise, just, and merciful:—I have acknowledged that you were placed in a miserable situation, but you had opportunities of escaping it: when the Rector's lady spoke to you as she did, why did you not tell her the truth? I am certain that she would have tried to remove the mists of error from your mind, nor would her kindness have stopped there; if she could not conveniently have afforded you a home, I know enough of her to be convinced that she would have procured you a respectable one with some of her friends. Or, why did you not advertise for a situation?"

"I am not fond of it, or of anything connected with the press."

"But, when it is a last resource, it is better than none: you might have referred to me, and to your governesses, and they would not have presumed to speak aught but the truth."

"I have already told you why I did not apply to you."

"Well, but your governesses were not married."

Gertrude moved her hands impatiently. "My patience was exhausted, and my repeated provocations were more than I could endure; I used to

say, 'Why am I thus tormented? I wish to do right;' and I did so wish; but suffering at last hardened my heart, and I did not care what became of me. I have smiled with scorn when I heard the mercy of God spoken of—where was it? from the hour of my birth, I have been the child of affliction."

Gertrude drew from her pocket a small case, and took out some pieces of paper, one of which she gave to Mr. L. "Read it, sir, the poetry I am aware does not deserve the name, but I was sincere in the sentiment."

Thou art far away, 'mid the great and the good;
 And the knee of the proud is bowed to thee;
 But insult and scorn, contempt and wrong,
 Are the gifts of the world to me.
 I have tasted its pleasures—they 're tinged with gall,
 Believe me, they 're found to be so by all,
 Be they far from thee: may'st thou never know
 An hour of pain, a day of woe.
 May thy path be bright as the noon-day sun,
 And, when the sands of life are run,
 May'st thou be found ready, thy work all done,
 And the prize of the Christian faith have won;
 That, when thy form is returned to the sod,
 Thy spirit may live before its God,
 In the choir of Heaven through ages to sing
 The praise of the Spirit, Redeemer, and King.

"To whom was this addressed?"

"The gentleman who now reads it."

Mr. L. bit his lips, and his colour changed, as he hurriedly said, "You will not persuade me that you ever felt the attachment these lines breathe; had you, you never could have swerved from it."

"We will not dispute that point: I was undoubtedly susceptible of a re-action after my acquaintance

with Lieut. E. ; his vivacity banished my gloom, neither did I need collect my thoughts to converse with him. A great many words conveyed little meaning, and, as he turned everything into ridicule, I was amused by his remarks."

"I think your mind must have been vitiated before you could even listen to him : what was there amusing in his profane jests, his ribald talking ?"

"I beg you to understand, Mr. L., that Mr. E.'s language is not such."

"Oh, no, I forgot, he is the courtly critic, the polished sneerer, he is a sort of second gentleman in Europe, a dangerous and reprobate character, whose rattling speech and seeming frankness cover a designing heart. He is one of those whose insinuating and plausible manners give them every opportunity of disturbing the peace of society ; open grossness offends, and we shun the delinquent—it is covert laxity that unhinges social order."

"He does not merit this vituperation—like me he has been a sacrifice ; a political father and a fashionable mother could spare no time to superintend their children. He was suffered to please himself, whether his pursuit was right or wrong ; and his parents were justly punished in witnessing his profligacy."

"Very well, see here a proof of the justice you deny: they neglected to inculcate the love of God, and morality towards men, and their favourite son plunged them into misery, and has brought ruin upon himself. You say your patience was exhausted, and that you could not praise the mercy of God ; but here you again trespassed against

Him. Not to fatigue you by quoting texts, I will say that we are constantly exhorted to have patience, and to those who bear their trials meekly it is promised that they shall have a happy issue out of them ; in several instances I have seen this promise realized, and it would have been to you, had you not, by giving way to the suggestions of an unregulated heart, deprived yourself of the possibility of enjoying your change of fortune. Dr. M. intended to provide liberally for all your family, but more especially for you ; for, when he came to investigate your affairs, he found that your father was the nephew of the lady to whom he was in early life so much attached ; and that circumstance, and your own merits, would have given you an irresistible claim upon his regard. I need not say how happy you must have been, the very trials you would have passed through would have made ease of mind and fortune the more acceptable to you ; and the approbation of your own heart would have been invaluable. Of myself I would not speak, had you not given me the unwelcome intelligence you have. Whether it is from prejudice, or a feeling that, by giving it, a female lowers herself, I will not decide ; but my sex are not in general pleased with unsought love. It is seldom—never—reciprocated ; and I do not mean to say that ever you would have received mine ; but you certainly would have commanded my warmest esteem. I have said that you were a favourite of mine, and much more greatly so would you have been had you risen above yourself and your sex, by combatting great, and almost overwhelming, difficulties. But you have said that

you ceased to cherish that exclusive preference you once entertained for me, and transferred your affection to Licut. E. Now it is admitted that the influence of a female over a person who sincerely loves her is excessively great, and I will suppose you displeased with Mr. E., and shunning his society while he continued a dissipated character: to have gained your approbation he might have ceased to be such, and you would have had the exquisite pleasure of reforming one, as you say, naturally well disposed, but corrupted by fortuitous circumstances. But I will pass by that, and suppose you parted from every one to whom you were attached; and, struggling with pride and ignorance, in a humble station, I will suppose that Dr. M. never sought you, and that no one stepped forward to assist, yet your own conscience would have spoken peace in the bitterest hours; and the hope of living for ever united to the dear friends from whom you were separated here would have smoothed your path, and made it appear no longer rugged. I do not refer to these things to add to your present unhappiness, far from it, I wish to point out a way by which you may know no more. At the extremity of my estate in——I have a very neat cottage at present unoccupied, if you will promise to make no further attempts on your life, and should it please God to spare you to live more correctly than you have hitherto done, this abode and £300 or £400 a year is yours instantly. Remember you justly blame your mother as the first cause of your misconduct; you have a child, will you so live that he must either execrate you as his misleader, or shun, for his own good, the only parent

he will ever know? Mr. Ellison is married now, and, if he be not completely vitiated, he will pay some respect to the engagement into which he has entered. He may contribute to the support of his son, but can he afford him his personal protection? put yourself, for an instant, in the place of Lady Ellison: would you consent to your husband's educating under your roof the child of a female for whom he avows a decided preference? Perhaps, seeing your own children neglected and humiliated, that his more favoured child might be certain that he possessed the whole of his father's love. 'Certainly he merits affection from both of you—you have done him an irreparable injury. Whatever he may be, however good, his birth will be the subject of comment, and the scornful will well know how to wound his feelings. You told Dr. M. that you considered the circumstances attending your grandfather disgraceful, yet you have entailed the same disgrace on your child. What is past cannot be recalled, but, for the future, you may avoid a line of conduct which can only bring ruin upon all connected with you. Do consider my proposals, no one will know anything of you, and the respected vicar will give you every assistance; Dr. M. will occasionally see you, and attend to the instruction of your son. By prudence and penitence you may redeem many of your errors; and, though the morning of your life has been troubled and unhappy, its noon may be tranquil, and the evening of your days may close in peace.'

Gertrude shook her head. "I will not deceive you, Mr. L.: if any one could change my opinions, it is yourself; but, though I admit the force of

many points upon which you have touched, I do not mean to believe them. If I understand aught of reasoning, penitence implies a forsaking of error, and an entire amendment of life. This may obtain the pardon of God, but it will not make the person happy. Instead of being at peace, his conscience will for ever suggest how miserably wicked he must have been to offend against so good a God ; and that idea, and the knowledge that the regret and anguish of our own hearts prevent our mixing with the happy and unsinning, will effectually banish repose. If I repent, it must be to shut myself from the light of the sun, and to practise every species of mortification, as I should feel myself unworthy to participate in the innocent amusements of the uncorrupted. Besides, my sins are too great to be pardoned."

"Not so. Remember, He who Himself bore them in His own person declared that He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance !"

"Yes, but He did not say that He would pardon those who denied Him."

"Did He not pardon Peter ? and forgive those other disciples that fled from him ? And your offences have not been so great as theirs ; because they knew, and had seen, the power of His works, and they had borne witness of His Divine authority ; but you openly threw it off : you did not deny Him in your works, while you professed to worship Him with your lips. And, though every one must feel shocked at your profane sentiments, still I am bound to own that you brought no disgrace on the name of Christianity, or on the religion of its Founder. Therefore, in the sight of God, you are less

guilty than they who acknowledge a Creator, and yet live the lives of heathens: but this comparative innocence is yet heinous guilt; and let me entreat you to avail yourself of the opportunities afforded you of reforming yourself."

Miss M. appeared to pay no attention to what he said, and she suddenly interrupted him by saying, "Mr. L., you are an advocate of education, you support it in your writings, and in your speeches; for mercy's sake, take care what education you give the people: the majority of them are born to labour, and to humble life; give them not ideas above it—fit them not for converse with kings and scientific men. It is a refinement of cruelty to do so; the man that is familiar with the writings of philosophy and polite literature can never endure the drudgery of a mean station. I speak from wretched experience—education has been my bane. I could not exist, deprived of the elegancies to which I had been accustomed, nor could I endure subjection to those who, I felt, were my inferiors in mind, as much as my superiors in the world. Those domestic offices I was expected to attend to were insupportable. I was thinking of my music, or the fascinating pages of our classic writers, when I was required to assist in the household work, or wait on those lodgers Mrs. Lumley chose to take. Do not refine the mind of those whose conditions are laborious or dependent—it will render their occupations unbearable. He whose hand is to guide the plough, or ply the shuttle, should never receive an education fit for him who is to wield a sceptre. It is madness—worse than madness:—give the people learning, but let it be such as is fit for them, and such as will not incapacitate them for the

duties of their station. A clever child will always manifest its genius ; let such receive instruction, but do not attempt to cultivate the mass ; they were not created for superior beings, and, in enlarging their thoughts, you but increase their wants, and diminish their chances of being happy. Were revolutionists ever ignorant men ? No ; they were those who had received superior learning, and who, finding themselves unable to rise by legitimate means, plunged their country into anarchy, that they might escape the tedium of every day existence, and make known their talents to the world. Fifty years ago, a tradesman was not ashamed of his calling, nor were his daughters qualified for governesses, nor his sons for tutors : now they are : Miss must have her piano, her drawings, and her foreign masters ; and the young gentleman must pay due attention to Hebrew, the mathematics, politics, and theology. What will be the end of this ? They will disdain their trades, and terminate their career as forgers ; and the daughters, after fluttering for awhile as the mistresses of those scions of the nobility who are not quite ruined by their own folly and by their trades-people, will sink into the grave, as I shall, broken-hearted and despised."

"Then you blame Mr. Dawson?"

"No, I do not ; his intentions were good, he knew I had enough to keep me above want, and, as an officer, my father was so much respected that it would not have been difficult to have found friends for his daughter. But I did not know them, and it was not to be expected that any one would notice Mrs. Lumley : she might have had the best of friends, but she insulted all who wished to serve her, and deprived me of estimable and kind acquaintances. But for her,"

might have been as happy as I am now miserable, had she acted properly, I should never have been taken from her, I should never have known you, nor had she have let me remain with the Signora, should I have ever known Lieutenant E."

"This is but too true, Miss M.; Mrs. L. is a most detestable character, still I ought not to say so to you; for although it is impossible you can feel any respect for her, yet to denounce so near a relative is contrary to all the feelings of our nature. I will leave you now, and I hope by to-morrow you will be prepared to consent to my arrangements."

"Have you brought her to any degree of reason, Arthur?" said Dr. M---, when his young friend joined him at the supper table.

"She is less violent, sir; but it is physical weakness which compels her to be calmer; she is indignant at being watched, but, as she still refers to death in the same desperate terms, I think it necessary."

"Poor girl, what a pity it is! persons who possess great talents generally have violent passions. I wish I had known there was such a person, and where to find her: why, Arthur, did you not enquire for her?"

"My dear sir, how could I do so, after the lamented death of my dear mother, would it have been proper for me to have received young ladies in the familiar manner I did before? And, to say the truth, I was displeased with her; I thought it was not her place to treat us with neglect."

"Certainly it was not. But the sooner she is in the country the better. I will adopt the boy."

Gertrude refused to leave the villa, she seemed determined to thwart the Dr. and Mr. L.; and, though

she listened to the latter, she frequently told him she would not believe him. He anxiously and unceasingly tried to influence, not to change, her opinions; for Gertrude, now that life was fast receding, did not pretend to adhere to them, though with real anguish she told him she dare not hope.

A few days before her death, Gertrude became entirely delirious, but, even in her wildest fits, that ever loved name, that well known voice, was recognized, and Leclerc was the last sound her lips emitted, as they closed in death.

"There," said Mr. L., as he dropped the lately burning hand, "there fled a spirit cast in Nature's finest mould, and who, but for her mother, would not have died thus in the very bloom of youth." He dashed away the tears that obscured his sight, and, taking the arm of Dr. M——, led him from the apartment.

The following morning, they merely exchanged the salutations of the day; the breakfast passed in silence, and Mr. L. was deeply affected: that very day, thirteen years past, he had first seen Gertrude, and her image, as she laid the wild flowers on the parlour table, swam before him; and, contrasted with her present state, pained him too greatly for any consideration to allow him to smother his grief. He rose hastily, without tasting his chocolate, and walked to the window to conceal his emotion. The attempt was almost vain, and he trembled excessively, while he perused some papers which were folded in Gertrude's pocket-book. They were written a few days before her death, and addressed to him.

"When, Mr. Leclerc, you read those lines, I shall be no longer Gertrude Manvers. I would not write, but my aching head and aching heart, are less weary when I do, than if I suffered my

thoughts to distract me. I have put some of them into verse, I will not call it poetry ; but, such as it is, preserve it ; not for my sake, but for my child's. Let him know, in the sad history of the hapless writer, the reward of a life of evil ; let him see my last expressions, that he may take warning, and, when on the brink of error—pause—my child ! Be to him a protector, and a guide, his father never can : love him, for his mother loved you ; not in her moments of vice and folly, not in years of evil, but in the days of childhood, in her hours of innocence and ease, though few they were, and the best of them tinged with gloom. My senses wander, I would say a great deal, but—your mother ; I think often of her, had she been mine, O, that she had ! I could not have loved her more : but why do I retrace the past, or why think of the future ? it is horrible ! Remember my last wish, let not my child live so that his death may be like mine—without hope."

The remainder of the paper was unintelligible, and bore little resemblance to the elegant hand she once wrote : on the back were written the lines to which she had alluded.

To Mr. Leclerc.

"O, had I learned my temper to subdue,
To check each wayward wish, each roving thought,
Still happy had I lived, lov'd e'en by you,
Nor fleeting grandeur with my peace had bought.
You, who my history know, shun rash despair,
Nor think your faults excused because you're fair.
The greater talents that to us are given
The greater be our gratitude to Heaven.
And let it live, for ever let it shine,
The diamond sparkling in the world's dark mine."

Mr. Leclerc replaced the paper, and gave the book to Dr. M——.

"Take it, sir ; if I value my own tranquillity, I must not suffer my thoughts to dwell upon it." And perhaps, at the moment, Mr. Leclerc would have resigned every power of pleasing rather than have had

his mind burthened with the idea that a too high estimation of them had added one sorrow to the trials of Gertrude. To reflect was not only useless, but injurious, and he took up the newspaper to divert his thoughts. Among the arrivals, he read, 'Lieutenant, and the Right Honourable lady Louisa, Ellison, in Bruton-street, from —— park, the seat of Lord L——.' This information determined Mr. Leclerc to see Mr. Ellison; he ordered his carriage, and requested Dr. M—— not to be surprized if he brought Mr. Ellison home with him.

Mr. Ellison was denied.

"I must see him," said Mr. Leclerc, stepping past the footman, "I will absolve you from all blame."

Mr. L. had visited there with his cousin, and, being well acquainted with the house, he proceeded at once to Mr. Ellison's room. He had evidently been up all night, and, as Mr. L. had expected, he received him very uncourteously.

"I will discharge every servant in the house for their disobedience. You, Mr. L., have always been supposed to be a gentleman, yet you do not act like one. At other times, I am not favoured with your company, now you wish to thrust it upon me."

Mr. Leclerc found expostulation vain, and hastily said, "I see you now, in consequence of an unpleasant occurrence. Miss Manvers——"

"What of her? where is she? I insist that you tell me."

"Will you accompany me, Ellison? she was at my house seven weeks."

"And is there now?"

Mr. L. bowed his head. Mr. Ellison followed Mr. Leclerc immediately, and, when seated in his carriage, exclaimed,

"I only came to London on Wednesday, and I have been wild about her. When I went, I found the house shut up, no one did, or would, know anything of her; the only information I could obtain was that she had quitted, and, not returning, her servants had helped themselves, and set off. I went half over London; I went to the woman who has my son, she had not seen her; I sent advertisements to all the newspaper offices, and my mind has been in too perturbed a state to allow me to take any rest. I little thought she was with you."

"She was with me." And Mr. Leclerc then detailed the circumstances which had placed her under his roof, but he did not say that her illness had terminated fatally.

Mr. E. had scarcely entered the parlour, when he requested to see her.

"Sit down, Ellison; I have much to say to you: when you married, what were your intentions respecting Miss M?"

"What they have ever been; I did not mean to bind myself by those obligations into which I was compelled to enter. Lady Louisa bears my name, but her ladyship must dispense with my society; even Gertrude failed to engross all my time, and Lady Ellison shall in no way triumph over her."

"Lieut. E., I never before believed you a deliberate villain."

Mr. E. laid his hand on his sword.

"I am no duellist, Mr. E., and if I were, I would not place myself on a level with you: you have said what were your thoughts, but it has pleased a Higher Power to disappoint them, and to save you from heaping further guilt upon your head. I said Miss M.

was with me, but the fever, by which she was attacked, has proved fatal."

"This is a vile fiction, you have tormented the poor girl with your monkish stuff, until you have wrung from her a consent to this deception. Where have you sent her? I will find her, be she on land or sea."

Mr. L. allowed him to rave on, and did not reply to his incoherent interrogatories; Dr. M. had not so much patience, he regarded Mr. E. as the destroyer of his hopes, and felt very much inclined to rebuke him severely; but his habitual meekness predominated over his anger, and he calmly said, "This insulting violence could not be endured, were we not too much shocked by the insane death of the unfortunate young female for whom you profess so great an attachment. If you really doubt my word, accompany me, and you shall be satisfied that we have spoken the melancholy truth."

Mr. E. started from his chair, and followed the Dr. to the apartment, where, shrouded in the garments of the grave, lay all that remained of his adored Gertrude. The revulsion in his feelings did not manifest itself as the Dr. had expected; he did not vent his grief in vehement action or passionate exclamation; he long gazed on her changed features, and, as he slowly turned away, he calmly said, "This is my work: Dr. M., forgive me." The Dr. did not speak, but he did not refuse the offered hand of his former pupil; and they returned to the parlour together. "My wife," said the Lieut. bitterly, "will be uneasy at my absence. Will you allow me to remain here, and send a servant to tell her where I am?"

Mr. L. assented: and Mr. E., clasping his hands, placed them on his forehead, as though he would

exclude the world and its objects from his sight. Mr. L. was not surprised at his calmness; his violent paroxysms had exhausted his physical strength, and his depression was equal to his former violence. Mr. L. exerted himself, and soon regained his usual composure.

Mr. E. remained a passive spectator of the preparations for Gertrude's funeral, which Mr. Leclerc's steward and butler were to attend; but Mr. E. set this arrangement aside, by declaring that he would see her remains deposited in the silent tomb. To oppose him was vain, he went, and stayed through the whole of the service.

On his return, he had a long and affecting conversation with Mr. Leclerc; and, as he parted from him, he wrung his hand, and, as well as his emotion would permit, he slowly said, "God bless you, Mr. L., I never could be an infidel, and I will no longer try to be one; but, do not be surprised if you hear of my going abroad: England will, for the future, be no home for me. As the spider entangles his victim in the meshes of his net, so did I pursue her; I intersected her path and haunted her wherever she went, I conquered, but the victory has left me miserable for ever; I cannot resign my child. I know what advantages would accrue to him from being under your care; but I cannot part with him, I will take him with me, and if, parental care can do good, he shall have it. Oh! Mr. L., had Gertrude and I had such mothers as you had, how different would have been our lives."

Mr. L. never heard of his mother without emotion: he did not expect stability from Mr. E., and he could not avoid saying,

"Do remember your duty to that boy, and not

only to him, but your wife ; your penitence will not be accepted if it lead you to injure her by depriving her of your protection and kindness."

"My wife does not merit being made unhappy by witnessing my gloom ; you talk of the torments of another world, but none can equal those I have endured these last two months. Were Louisa a fashionable, unfeeling, being, I should not feel constrained to treat her with civility ; but she saw I was unhappy, and she strove by a thousand little kindnesses to remove my disquiet, and make me the same gay creature her young companion was. Her affection, her unmerited affection, has cut me to the heart, and I know my health will not endure the struggle. I feel now completely miserable ; I have for years acted against the suggestions of my conscience, and it now tells me that I do not deserve her, and that I can never make her amends for doing her the injury I have. She is tied for life to one who must either shock her by his profligacy, or grieve her by his misery ; there is no middle course for me : if I banish thought it must be by living as I have done, if I think, I must ever remember my crimes. Mr. Leclerc, you are right ; there is no peace in a vicious life, for awhile it may please, but in the end it will sting. I can never forget Gertrude—until I tried to corrupt her, she was proud, and rather impatient ; but she possessed many, very many, amiable qualities, and she had in her heart the germ of every virtue. When I reflect how happy I might have been had I fostered her virtues, and encouraged her efforts to do well, I can scarcely keep my senses. My dear Maria would have rejoiced in such a sister, and would have given her that instruction which was alone requisite to make her good, as well as irresistibly charming."

“Take another view, Ellison, of what you might have done. All things considered, Gertrude was an unfit wife for you. You knew she did not feel that affection for you which I am romantic enough to believe ought mutually to exist before such a near relationship is contracted. I wonder that you should wish to hold a second place in the heart of her you wished to be your wife. Answer me, and answer truly, would you not have been far happier had you acted by Gertrude as every man of honour should? Say that you had obtained for her the protection of some one of your female relatives; that you had advised, admonished, her, and had yourself crushed every feeling of wrong affection, and become the husband of your estimable wife. Lady Ellison's sincere affection would have constituted your happiness; and how would you have been recompensed for any uneasiness which you might have been caused by a determination to do right, while listening to the grateful thanks of an amiable and deserving woman, rendered, by your honourable kindness, competent to receive and to enjoy those advantages of fortune and connexion, which would now have been hers!”

“Stop, Mr. Leclerc, do not quite distract me: you—yes, you—would have acted so, I am sure you would; but I—I am punished. If ever you have a hour to spare, do remember that there is such an wretch as Westropp Ellison.”

Mr. Leclercé promised to visit him, whenever he had an opportunity; but Mr. E. left England; he solicited and obtained active employment on the coast of Africa. Lady Louisa had discovered that she was not to expect happiness, but she was not prepared for the statement of her husband, who related, without

concealing any of the facts, his acquaintance with Miss Manvers.

"After this explanation, Mr. E.," said her ladyship, "I should lose sight of what is due to myself, if I forced my company upon you; it is evidently undesired, and I do not wish to intrude upon you. If you wish me, I will go with you to Africa, if not, I will return to India with my father."

"I have no right to make her miserable," said Mr. E. mentally: he added aloud, "Louisa, if you can bear with me, go with me. Caroline's husband has left the Amazon, and I think I can get him appointed second Lieutenant of the frigate of which I am nominated first; for your sake, my sister will go, so you will not want an affectionate friend."

"If I did not feel it my duty, Westropp, I would not accompany you; you have chilled my heart, but your own thoughts must be sufficiently afflictive."

Mr. E. had intended to take his son with him, but, as her ladyship was going, he could not do so; and he thankfully accepted Mr. Leclerc's offer of attending to him. He placed £2000 in Mr. L.'s hands for the child's use, and left England, hoping that he might never return to it.

Lady E. proved the fallacy of the old, and not very moral, argument, that reformed men make the best husbands: it is unreasonable to suppose that they should. An anonymous writer justly remarks, "If a man be not reformed, his wife will live most miserably; if he be reformed, the recollection of his own irregularities will blight his gaiety, and prevent his participating in those innocent enjoyments of life which constitute its happiness." I have heard this proverb argued upon, and with most injurious effects,

since young men, perceiving how venial their offences are thought, and that there are ladies who wish to have the glory of reforming them, will not hesitate to lead immoral lives, since they may be sure that any lady will gladly credit their reformation, that she may receive the merit of having effected it, and in the belief that she will find the saying true. How often it is found false I will not now stop to enquire; but I will remark, to my fair country women, that they do not add to their honour when they encourage vice, and of late years they have done nothing else: a man now, to gain their favour, must be well known to be a dissipated character, and those who are not really such must pretend to be so, or they will not be estimated in the drawing-room. That a man whose opinion of females is formed from associating with the worst of them should highly respect a woman of firm principles and virtuous conduct is very likely, but the question is, would he deserve her? Although we do, and, as the world is constituted, must of necessity, respect many whom we do not exactly love, yet respect must be the foundation of affection, or it will not be lasting. Lady Louisa could not respect her husband, she could only pity him, and that, though said to be akin to love, often partakes of the nature of contempt. Mr. E. was really reformed, and, as his offences had been great, so was his contrition: but Lady Louisa had every reason to regret her precipitate union with him; for, though kind and attentive to her, his melancholy was most oppressive. The frivolity of the navy was not now suited to his taste, and he at times lectured the junior officers on their conduct.

One custom, I know not whether it now prevails, was, like many others, very reprehensible. The dignity

of their characters prevented their sending their stock of glass and china on board the ship to which they might be ordered to remove ; and, if the purser had displeased them, or they were intoxicated, each set his assortment on the mess table, and, providing himself with a stick, struck them until the broken fragments gave evidence of the wisdom of their former owners. The Lieutenant had often associated at these 'smashes,' but he now strove to check the system, and in some instances he was successful.

His example, too, went a great way in remedying a flagrant abuse. As, in all professions, some persons, mean by birth and connexion, had entered the service, and been promoted, some of them had received large sums as their share of the prize money of the late war, and that it was spent in a most unworthy manner was attributable to the example of their aristocratic compeers. Lord William, and Lord Frederic, and the honourable and right honourable Lieutenants and Volunteers, always insinuated that their company was a high honour ; which undoubtedly it would have been, had their conduct accorded with their rank ; but that was not the case, and they looked to their 'honoured brother officers' to defray the expenses of their carousals. They borrowed money, too, without any intention of repaying it, thinking and saying that they favoured their inferiors by accepting it. In such a service the humbler never durst ask the superior, although, perhaps, the want of the money compelled him to contract debts, and inflict needless mortifications on his family. Lieut. E. had been as guilty of this practice as any, he had requested £50 of the second master, he thought it the gentleman's duty to lend it him ; had it been refused, promotion would have

never been obtained; for, though masters in the navy are generally stationary, an act of tardy justice is sometimes done them, and they receive a Lieutenant's commission, but he that refused Mr. E. need not have expected it. This sum, and several others, had never been paid, and Mr. E. blushed when he met the gentleman at Juan Fernandez; he settled the debt instantly, and, when he went on board, lectured the other officers, on the degrading nature of the practise, and earnestly requested them to discontinue it. Several vowed that he had turned Methodist, and one remarked that he should have gone to India, with his lady's father, there were ample means for him to manifest his proselytism, and the Hindoos might have been converted by so eloquent a teacher. These sneers did not affect him, and he possibly might have effected much good had he not met a premature death, which, although relief to him, was the cause of great grief to his friends.

While loitering on the deck, his quick eye espied a suspicious looking sail, and they immediately gave chase to her; after a hard struggle, they came up with her, and summoned them to surrender. Their answer was a broadside, and the crews of the two vessels engaged in a sanguinary conflict. The Portuguese fought with desperation, but were at length overpowered, and Mr. E. was one of the first to board her. She had four hundred slaves on board, and had been at sea eight days; the sufferings of the poor creatures were such as those only who have witnessed them can adequately describe. Mr. E. had never before seen such a spectacle, and he was thrown off his guard while contemplating their misery. One of the crew, who was apprehensive of being recognized, and

tried for piracy, had determined to terminate his existence, but, with a dire spirit of revenge, resolved not to fall alone; he seized a cutlass, and, aiming at the Lieutenant, who stood by, passed it through his heart, and then, before any one could prevent it, through his own. (On the deck, amid the dying and the dead, the fine eyes of Lieut. Ellison closed in death, and his spirit fled, we will hope, to a better world.

The distraction of his sister and Lady Ellison overcame the hardy veterans who had served in the battles of their country, and stood the fire of three countries without flinching; all that was in their power to assuage their grief they did. Lady E. declined returning to England, and, in compliance with her wishes, she was sent to St. Helena, where she embarked on board one of the Company's ships for India.

Mr. Ellison's sister and her husband, who went home with despatches, were the first bearers of the melancholy news to Lord L——. The aged nobleman had deplored the futility of the measures by which he had sought to ensure the happiness of his nephew, and his heart told him he was in part to blame. The first order that he gave was for his travelling carriage: his eldest surviving nephew was much astonished when his uncle entered the room at the college, of which he was then a fellow. He hastily placed a chair, and extended his hand to his uncle.

"I am glad to see you, my lord, but I am much surprised."

"I dare say you are, Frank; but I see, by your ring, they have told you about poor Westropp. I have come to talk to you: you shall be happy, if I can make you so. Frank, I know you are partial to Maria; I don't like marriages between relations, but does the girl like you?"

"I believe she does, but—"

"No buts at all, Frank; you and your father are my heirs now, and I have just seen enough of checking proper affection. If Maria was a beggar, I would say, marry her; a wife has an interest in your welfare, and will care for you, when you do not care for yourself; but a mistress, Frank, is another name for ruin."

"I hope, my lord, that you do not think I am such a hypocrite as to follow the steps of my unfortunate cousin."

"No, I do not think you are. I believe that Maria's superiority over her family is owing to the lessons which you have given her. I have had quite enough of match-making; do not marry, unless you wish to do so; or, if you prefer any to your cousin, do not deceive her: but, if you really love Miss Ellison, money shall be no obstacle. Quit your profession, it is no longer necessary that you have one, and, by holding your present situation, you may perhaps injure some meritorious man, while you are not benefiting yourself. As soon as etiquette will permit, you have my consent to unite yourself to whom you please. I will settle £1000 per annum upon you, and I will trust to your own good sense to select a lady worthy of your future rank."

"That will be Maria, uncle; it is a long time since I vowed never to love any but herself."

"Very well: do you owe your tradesmen any bills?"

"O, no," said Mr. E., smiling; "I found out, some time since, that to be in debt was to be dependent, and that extravagance did not recommend me to the wise and good."

“Right, right; had I my time to live over again, I would not let young people have an unlimited command of money; that was one thing that led Westrop into error. There are always plenty of sharpers ready to take advantage of the inexperienced; but when they think they will not profit by it, they will not seek to corrupt any one. Francis did not do his duty to his children, and, as the head of the family, I ought to have admonished him of it, but, though I knew what was right, I did not practise it, and I have been well punished for it. Thank God, Frank, every hour you live, that your father taught you, and enforced his precept by his example.”

The Rev. Mr. Ellison acknowledged the truth of his uncle's remark, and that he owed much to his father, who, though Colonel of a cavalry regiment, was neither an immoral nor irreligious man. At the expiration of a year, with the approbation of all his friends, Mr. E. led his cousin to the altar; but Mrs. Ellison could not suppress her tears, as she reflected that the title to which her husband was the apparent heir would, but for his own misconduct, have been borne by her beloved brother. Lord L.'s feelings were not the most enviable, but he rejoiced that at least one of his relatives was ensuring his own happiness by steadily pursuing the paths of rectitude. His lordship survived long enough to witness the baptism of a grand-nephew, to whom he was godfather.

“My years, Frank, forbid my indulging the hope that I shall see that child attain majority, or be able to instruct him as I have this day promised, but I can leave him a good legacy—give him this bible, and if he regulate his life by its laws he will want no other teacher. The peer's forebodings were true, he died.

when the young Frederick was two months old, and, from his calmness and resignation, he was evidently not unprepared for the awful change. Lady L—— had died a short time after Mr. Ellison's union with Lady Louisa: and, on the death of his brother, Colonel Ellison succeeded to an unencumbered estate of £12,000 per annum, which, in his hands, and those of his son, were applied to the best of purposes. The Hon. Mrs. Ellison was at first much shocked by the death of her son; but cards quickly banished her regret, and she continued as thoughtless and frivolous as she had ever been. Happily for them, her daughters took a different course: Caroline was happy, and made her husband so, and the Hon. Mrs. Maria Ellison never gave her husband reason to regret his union with her."

CHAPTER X.

A FAMILY quarrel separated Lient.-Col. Leclerc from the father of Arthur; he was proud and persevering, and, as the latter elevated him in his profession, the former prevented his seeking the friendship of his brother. The early death of Commander Leclerc prevented any intercourse between the two families; his widow knew not the Colonel, and he, then Major Leclerc, having satisfied himself that Arthur was his brother's legal heir, never, in any way, communicated with him. This frequently grieved Mr. L., who read, in the Calcutta Journals, many deserved encomiums on his uncle.

"I wish," he once observed to his mother, "that we were intimate; although I have never seen him, still he is my relation."

"He did not behave well to your father, Arthur., I do not wish you to meet with any insult from him. Would you like him to return your letters? or, to tell you to wait till he asked for your notice?"

"Certainly, I should not." And there the subject dropped.

The daughters of the Lieut.-Col. were great readers ; some of their cousin's books came into their hands, and then, for the first time, they learnt they had such a relation : their mother felt rather picqued when she read the works of her unknown nephew.

"He has had the benefit of an English education," she reproachfully observed to her husband : "my son is ruined for the want of instruction. You cannot say that Alfred is deficient in talent ; why not let him receive an university education, and then our cousin may be as celebrated as the other !"

"I cannot go to England, and do you think I will ask that boy to notice my son ? not I indeed, he has got learning enough for a soldier."

"Which he never shall be while I live. I wonder how you can think of such a thing ; with your immense wealth it is absolutely folly. And Clara, too, she is entirely ruined here ; you must have seen what a difference there is between Lady Louisa and her, yet her ladyship is not the most accomplished."

"You would not be able to exist in England."
(Mrs. Leclerc was a native of India.)

"Never mind, I will run the risk of that."

"Very well, Sarah, then go ; but, recollect that the manners of the people are different, and society is regulated on principles which will be entirely new to you. Here you rise early, and repose during the heat of the afternoon ; but, in England, the ladies spend the morning at their toilet, visit till three or four, dine at six, pass the evening at the theatre or in the ball-room."

"Do not fear ; I shall soon be initiated ; the Marchioness will be my instructress. I have another request, let Alfred go to the same college that this Mr. L. did."

The Colonel laughed, "You surely think that the air is impregnated with genius."

"It is a harmless conceit, do oblige me."

Her husband nodded; and Mrs. L. then told her children that they were going to England.

"My father's country!" exclaimed Alfred, "the land of truth and justice; but, surely, out of England these virtues do not exist even in Englishmen; to be sure, they do govern India little better than the Moguls, Emperors, and Soubahs, used to do; but their government reflects little credit upon themselves: and their precious Supreme Court, at Fort William, has set the country in a flame, and will always, unless justice be better administered."

"Well said, Alfred, come to me as learned as you will, but bring back an untainted mind."

Mr. Alfred made his father many promises, but he knew nothing of the world, and he fell a victim to his own simplicity. Soon after his arrival in England, he went to Northumberland, where a relation of the husband of his married sister resided, and, after staying there a few weeks, he left for college; where, unfortunately for himself, he became intimate with Westropp Ellison. Mr. Alfred Leclerc was unsuspecting and gay; the liveliness of Mr. E. amused him, and he thought it could not be criminal, as Mr. E. was studying for the church, and surely would not allow himself to transgress the bounds of propriety. But his better sense frequently told him that the scenes into which his companion led him were not such as he should enter; and, at one time, he did not speak to Mr. E. for two months.

"What have I done to offend you, Leclerc?" said Mr. E., walking into his sitting-room late one evening.

“ You have not offended me, Mr. E ; but the last time I was in your rooms, I left enebriated, and spent the night in a way of which I cannot approve.”

“ Stuff and nonsense ; old women’s tales, of which you ought to be ashamed ; now, I am going to the theatre to-night, will you go ?”

“ No.”

“ Why not ? come, Mr. Moralist, you cannot object to ‘ the feast of reason ;’ you read Shakespeare, why should you refuse to see his plays ?”

“ Because the after-piece is generally some obscene or profane composition ; and, though I may not stay it out, my having been there sanctions it ; and though I have not the assurance to suppose that my actions are of any great importance, yet I like them to please myself.”

Mr. E. laughed aloud. “ You and I should change situations. I am much more fit for an Indian life than you are, for I am not troubled with a very tender conscience ; indeed, we think it quite enough to go through the forms of our order. You were vastly pleased with the charity sermon which a Reverend Lord delivered a few days back ; what do you say to his playing cards on a Sunday ?”

“ I do not believe it.”

“ O, very well ; I wish I could resuscitate Cromwell or Harrison, I would send him to keep you company : upon my life, Leclerc, you are a perfect puritan.”

“ I am no such thing ;” said the young student, angrily.

“ No, really I forgot, you are economical ; it would ruin you to pay six shillings, even to enjoy the singing of that delightful creature, Miss ——.”

“ No, sir, I hope I am not mean.”

"Prove it; go with me: if you don't, I certainly shall think that the price frightens you."

Mr. L. turned round in a passion, and took some notes out of his bureau.

"You are not going in your gown and cap?" said Mr. E., laughing.

"I wish you were a hundred miles away, Ellison. I will not go."

"Oh, very well, I'll send Cooke to you, and then you'll be two saints and two misers together."

Mr. L. could not bear the imputation of avarice or superstition; and, grieved that Mr. E. should think him addicted to either, he threw off his gown, and accompanied his false friend, who secretly laughed at his folly, for he well knew that Mr. L. was neither pretensive nor avaricious.

Mr. L. was very fond of theatrical amusements; and, as one step generally leads to another, from being in the house, he wished to be on the stage; and, as Mr. E. was well known, he was admitted behind the scenes. He repeated his visits two or three times, and was dressing for an evening lounge, when Dr. M. entered his room, and lectured him upon his mode of passing his time.

"I had the happiness, Mr. L., of having your cousin under my care, and I greatly regret that you are not acquainted with him; if you were, you would esteem him too highly to make companions of such persons as Mr. Ellison. Unless a great change take place in his conduct, he will not be ordained, with my consent; and without it, I fancy, he will find it rather a difficult matter. So far as he is amenable to our discipline, I see it enforced, but he sometimes evades me."

Mr. L. blushed, and hurriedly said--"He ridicules

me so dreadfully that I cannot withstand his jeers."

"I thought so. It is something strange that people will allow themselves to be laughed out of their reason, and I am surprized you should: but Ellison has obtained a great ascendancy over you. I am going to attend the chymical lecture—come with me, and plead science, if you are ashamed of religion."

"Oh, Dr., no, not ashamed!"

"It seems as though you were. Your behaviour at chapel this morning was very improper: was it the consequence of previous intoxication? You were up all night."

Mr. L. could not deny that he was; and he accompanied the Dr., to efface from his mind the recollection of his errors. But a scientific lecture, and chymical observations, appeared very dull, when compared with the fascination of the stage, and the hilarity of his companions; and he was very glad when it was concluded, and he at liberty to follow his own inclinations.

"Good evening, sir," said Mr. Ellison, demurely placing a chair, when Mr. L. introduced himself: "gentlemen, allow me to present to you The Most Rev. Mr."—

"Stop, stop, Ellison, no nonsense; do not make yourself ridiculous."

"Nay, I am sure," said Mr. E., returning to the table, "that I have given you an appropriate title; you must assume it to be in character; must he not, Fitzmaurice?"

"Certainly; it must be piety, Mr. L., that led you to desert us to-night."

"Pray hold your tongue. I will take a glass of port, if you have it."

"That is too vulgar stuff to find a place here," said Mr. E.; "here is champagne."

Some stories, with sundry additions, set the party in an uproar, and Mr. L. forgot Dr. M. and his admonitions. 'Bad leads to worse:' in a few weeks Mr. L. did not need Mr. E. to ridicule him into profligacy, although he still did not go the lengths that his friend did.

"Is that a reprimand from Maunma?" enquired Mr. E., when he found Alfred attentively perusing a long letter.

"No, it is from my cousin, Mr. L.; he has just returned from the Continent, and says he does not wish to remain unknown to so near a relative. The letter is very kindly written."

For patience's sake, Leclerc, shun him as you would a plague; he is a perfect methodist! Do you not know that he failed in obtaining his degree of B.A. because he is more than half a Dissenter?"

"I always understood that he was accounted High Church and Tory in his principles."

"No such thing; ask Dr. M.: he will tell you what strange notions he holds. Oh, if you see him, good bye to your senses, you'll be in a mad-house in a month."

"Then you advise me not to answer him?"

"Oh, reply to his letter, certainly; but say that you have so many friends that you cannot increase the number."

"That is too bad, Ellison."

"Not at all: I'll write for you." And, as Mr. L. was unacquainted with Mr. E.'s writing, he supposed it his cousin's, and was naturally hurt by such contemptuous and insolent conduct.

"Arthur, did I not tell you what you had to expect?"

"You did, my dear mother; but this young man ought to be free from prejudice. His father has, possibly, told him to reject any overtures we might make."

"I hope you will not give yourself any further trouble."

Mr. L. said he would not, nor did he, although the letters of Dr. M. were filled with comments on the reprehensible conduct of his cousin, which was, every day, becoming worse. Mr. E. was his evil genius; he wanted to go to London, and he wished Alfred to go with him.

"How can I? I cannot get permission."

"Leave that to me. Will you go?"

"If you can manage it."

"We will set off to-night; and, if we are called to account, I will say I was sent for, and you can assign letters from your mother as the cause of your absence."

"What! utter a falsehood!"

"Oh, you'll never get rid of your ante-diluvian notions! Do you want to be sconced?* I may thank you for having a pretty heavy fine to pay last week—you must tell the truth, forsooth! Now, Leclerc, you owe me your society to London, as an amends for the trick you played me."

"You need not waste fifty words—I mean to go with you. I can get clothes in town."

As the worthy pair passed through the gates, Mr. E. gave the porter some silver. 'You know nothing of us,' he said, as he handed it to him. The

* A college term for being fined.

man nodded and laughed. Vice, as well as poverty, introduces us to strange companions. The haughty youth, who would have struck to the ground the being that presumed to contradict him, brooked a familiar and insulting laugh from a menial servant.

A fortnight soon fled in London, and, on his return, Mr. E. actually said that he had been sent for. As his father had been ill some time, he was believed; but Mr. Leclerc was much surprized to find letters from his mother lying on his reading-table. They were energetically written, and conveyed some lessons which, at one time, would have made a deep impression on the mind of her son; but they then excited his anger, and he exclaimed aloud,—

“Does she presume to dictate to me?”

“At any rate, that is a dutiful observation,” said Mr. Fitzmaurice, who was with him. “I advise you to retract it, and send a civil answer. You are going too far, Mr. L.; I like spirit, but I cannot admire impertinence.”

“Sir! I think you must retract! Am I impertinent?”

“And, to your mother, insolent. Now do not be in a passion, but, believe me, you take too much of Mr. E.’s advice.”

Mr. L. replied to this friendly hint, by swearing readfully, and finally told his monitor to retire.

Mr. Fitzmaurice was as little inclined to brook an insult as young men of his rank usually are, and their quarrel ended by his sending a challenge to Mr. L.

He accepted it; and sought Mr. E., to request he would stand his second, but Mr. E. had left for London; he was sent for to attend his dying father, and as, by his death, he became his own master, he never

returned. Dr. M—— declared he was extremely glad that Mr. E. had saved him the unpleasant duty of declaring him incompetent to receive his first degree, and as Mr. L. was compelled by his absence to seek another second, some time elapsed, and Mr. Fitzmaurice, recovering his temper, wrote to Mr. E., withdrawing the challenge he had sent.

TO ALFRED LECLERO, ESQ.

"By this time I have recovered my senses; as I cannot, in cool blood, determine to murder or be murdered, I beg to say that I shall decline meeting you. I am willing to oblivate the past, if you are.

Your's,

CHARLES FITZMAURICE."

"You are a good-natured creature, Fitzmaurice," said the young Indian; "I am very well content to agree to your proposal."

"Then we shall not blow one another's brains out," said Mr. F., laughing, when Mr. L. presented his hand.

Alfred shook his head, and, when Mr. F. quitted Oxford, they parted friends.

Mr. L. hourly offended; his taste had become so depraved that every thing that was harmless was looked upon with contempt, and he began to consider that his character would not be complete unless he patronized some of the fair actresses who occasionally visited the city. Dr. M——, who paid more attention to individual students than is generally given by collegiate authorities, transmitted an account of these lapses to his cousin, and earnestly requested that he would visit him.

"He is now, my dear Arthur, very ill; by drinking freely and keeping late hours, and then exposing him-

self to the cool air, he has seriously impaired his health, his illness will, I fear, terminate in consumption. He pays no attention to me, or to any one else, and appears completely under the influence of despair. I know no one who has more influence over the human heart than yourself, and I think, if you were to converse with him, he might be benefitted by your arguments. At any rate, your company will be a gratification to me; I shall half forget the fatigues of my official situation, in your presence."

To this request Mr. L. was compelled to return a negative; the state of his mother's health was so alarming, that he could not leave her for any length of time. Although suffering for some years, Mrs. Leclerc's death was at last sudden; she had dined down stairs, and retired to change her dress, when her maid perceived her countenance change, and, before she could summon Mr. L., his mother was speechless. Mr. L. knelt beside her, and folded her hand in his, while the housekeeper and her servants chafed her forehead, and tried to force syrup between her lips, but the effort was vain; once she gazed vacantly around, then fixed her eyes on her son, and, feebly pressing his hand, fell back in the arms of her attendants. Although heavy, the stroke was not altogether unexpected; Mr. L. was resigned, but it was impossible that he could be cheerful, and, as soon as he saw the body of his mother deposited in the vault of his ancestors, he waited on his former governor and still respected friend.

"How is Mr. Alfred L.?" was almost his first enquiry

"He is still very ill: will you go alone, or shall I introduce you?"

"I will go alone, sir; he might perhaps feel irritated, if you accompany me, and think that you intended to reprove him by deputy."

Mr. L. had no difficulty in finding his cousin's apartments, and he was immediately admitted into a room splendidly furnished, and richly decorated; on a sofa at one end, a youth reclined, whose extreme pallidness formed a striking contrast to the ebony frame on which his hand rested. He did not rise when Mr. Leclerc entered, and his voice was almost inaudible, as he said,

"May I request to know your business with me?"

"I shall not revert to the past," said Mr. L., "my wish is to render myself agreeable to you; do you not know that we are first cousins?"

"I have not spirits now to enter into questions of genealogy, nor can I bear intrusion." Mr. Alfred closed his eyes as he said this, and threw himself back on the sofa.

"I believe I am an unwelcome visitant," said Mr. L. bending over; "shall I stay, or retire?"

Alfred opened his eyes, and fixed them on the expressive ones of his cousin; in them he read neither moroseness nor fanaticism, and he smiled faintly, as he said, "O, you may stop if you will, but I cannot talk."

"I do not wish you; I will talk to you, or shall I read?"

"Yes; there is a book, but perhaps you will not read that?"

"Why not?"

"It is Mr Scott's Marmion"

"I do not know why you should think I would not read it; I am not exactly partial to his poetry; his genius appears to more advantage in his prose works. - but I do not dislike it."

Mr. Alfred bowed his head, and Mr. L. commenced reading. He soon entered into the spirit of a composition, and the various characters appeared to live, while he recited the words they were supposed to have uttered. Mr. Alfred was insensibly pleased, and, when his cousin shut the book and rose, he said, in a tone of regret, "Are you going?"

"For the present I am; I spend the evening with Dr. M——."

"Will you come to-morrow morning? come, and breakfast with me."

"I will not promise the latter; but I have come here on purpose to see you; so you will have my company often enough."

"Have you really come on my account, after that insulting letter?"

"I have; but do not fatigue yourself now, we will talk of that by and bye."

Mr. L. did visit his cousin daily, but his patience was frequently tried to its limits; in spite of the injunctions of his physician, and the suggestions of his reason, Mr. Alfred persisted in drinking wine and spirits, in abundance; he seemed to delight in rendering himself stupid.

"If men could but see themselves when they are intoxicated!" said Mr. L., when he found his cousin with a bottle of Burgundy before him; and the medicine which had been sent the day before untouched on the window seat of the large antique frame.

"What if they could? it banishes thought, and oblivion is a paradise."

"Rather a singular one, Alfred; and one which is not lasting. Are your sober, waking thoughts, very pleasant?"

“Perhaps not.”

“Then is it not madness to spend our time in a way which is present disgrace, and future misery?”

“Come, Arthur, don't preach.”

“I do not mean; but if I act the physician's part, I must tell you that you are irrevocably injuring your health; consumption, dropsy, madness, are a few of the agreeable consequences to which the *bon vivant* exposes himself. These diseases, and many others, are sufficiently afflicting when unsought; but I should not envy the feelings of the man who, when racked with pain, had the bitter reflection present to his mind that it was self-caused.”

“Your logic is not very correct, Arthur; the torments of the pain would prevent one's thinking.”

“That will do, Alfred: do you not see that you have condemned yourself? if the torment of the disease prevent our thinking, it is certainly very wise for us to live in that way, that thinking in health is unbearable, and that in sickness we cannot think at all!”

“A truce to satire, Arthur; for goodness' sake, why do you not write lampoons?”

“Because I do not admire scurrility; I wish to amend, not to incense; and, when I satirize, it is as a last resource. Virtue is ridiculed, and I think those do some service who make vice appear as it really is, ridiculous. What book have you here?”

“Pray do not touch it; Sir Moralist, will you contaminate yourself, by perusing a novel?”

“That will depend on circumstances; you, my cousin, have formed very erroneous ideas of me: I wish to patronize whatever is innoxious, I do not consider the generality of novels so, but there are some which are even sublime compositions. This I

have read before, and I admire it : it is little to the credit of female writers that their productions too frequently betray a grossness of idea and description that is quite incompatible with the opinion we are accustomed to entertain of their purity and delicacy. I would willingly burn all the works of one lady writer, whom I could name, but the works of the amiable Mrs. Opie always find a place in my library, as the paintings of her husband do among my pictures."

"You approve then, 'Adeline Mowbray,' or 'The mother and daughter?'"

"I do; I prefer it to 'The father and daughter;' the conduct and character of Agnes Fitzhenry are inconsistent with each other."

"I have never read either, so I cannot give an opinion, but, from what I have heard of your Methodism, I supposed you considered these things abominations."

"My Methodism?" repeated his cousin; "I am not aware that any part of my conduct merits the appellation. I have been censured for entering too gaily into the amusements of the world."

"Indeed?" and Mr. Alfred Leclerc then related several conversations he had had with Mr. E. respecting his cousin.

"I am not at all surprized now, that you should write as you did," said Mr. L.; "since, to Mr. E., I am aware I must appear a gloomy bigot; but no one but himself thinks me so. I always wish to participate in innocent enjoyments. I have received an invitation from my tenants, at Crayston-hall, to spend the Christmas month with them; if you will go, I promise you there shall be no lack of entertainment."

"I shall not be able. I am exhausted now with talking to you."

“ Let me be your doctor, Alfred, and I will ensure restoration, if you will but agree to only two conditions. First, you shall drink nothing but barley water, neither shall you eat aught but light-puddings ; and you must ride two or three hours a day.”

“ A likely matter, truly, when I cannot walk across the hall without assistance.”

“ Do you think you will gain strength by shutting out the air, and lounging all day on a sofa ? Come, Alfred, consent, or I will write to your mother.”

Mr. Alfred frowned, but he knew he could not tie his cousin's hands, and, as he dreaded seeing his mother, he yielded to his relative's better judgment, and allowed him to drive him round the country several hours every day. By the Christmas festival, Mr. Alfred's health was so much improved that he was able to leave for the hall, and Mrs. and Miss Leclerc, being invited, went down, and were introduced to their distinguished relation. The time passed pleasantly, Mr. Alfred met some old friends, and he found that life might be happy without its hours being murdered by debauchery. Mr. L. and his cousin were one evening loitering on the green, where the village children, inspired by the presence of their landlord, were gaily playing at various games.

“ I am afraid, my cousin, that when you return to college you will forget these happy scenes, and relapse into your former destructive habits.”

“ I do not know but I shall. So you had better travel with me, and keep me from evil by the fascination of your excellence.”

“ I do not like flattery, Alfred ; ‘ my excellence ’ is not what it ought to be ; I will willingly pass a few

months near you, but I fear that your instability will prove that I do not possess the power you ascribe."

Mr. Leclerc was right. Mr. Alfred fell into many errors when he rejoined his frivoious companions, and suffered a relapse, by imprudently remaining on the water while the dew fell heavily, after a very hot day.

Mr. L. was much grieved: "I know no other way of eradicating your faults, and renovating your health, than to detach you for a time from your present pursuits and associates. Will you go to Richmond?"

Mr. Alfred reluctantly consented, and, as he was seriously ill, Mrs. Leclerc gladly accepted the offered apartments which were occupied by her deceased and unknown sister-in-law. Mr. Alfred recovered slowly, he gave way to depression, and one morning, in a more than usually gloomy mood, he spoke of returning to his college. It was evidently without any settled purpose of attending to anything, and, after pacing the drawing-room, he threw himself on the hearth-rug, declaring that he was wearied of existence.

"Have you ever seen Blenheim, the seat of the Marlborough family?" enquired Mr. L., as he laid down the life of Sir John Vanbrugh, the architect who erected it.

"No, I never have; now you speak of it, I should like to see it; suppose you pay a flying visit to your friends at Crayston, and take a circuit to Woodstock."

"Agreed; my aunt, you and Clara, must see this noble building."

"No," said Mrs. L.; "I shall not travel so many miles, merely to inspect a great house and fine gardens; none that you have here can compare with the magnificent castles on the banks of the Ganges, and of the Hoogley."

Mr. L. smiled at his aunt's national prejudice, and, as Miss L. likewise declined, the cousins departed alone.

"You are very serious, Arthur," said his cousin, as they took their tea in the best drawing-room of the Bear, at Woodstock.

"I will give you a reason, by and bye: you will not go to Blenheim to-night?"

"No."

In the morning they rode towards that celebrated mansion. Although not then what it is now, it was still much dilapidated: in its pristine state, the park was extremely beautiful, but, when the cousins visited it, it was entirely neglected. The soil was in several places deprived of its verdure, and very swampy, while the trees grew together, and gave the place a confused and lumbered appearance. This was particularly the case in the part where the bower of Rosamond de Clifford once bloomed in beauty, equal to its lady, and far more attractive, because—innocent. The steps by which she descended were misplaced, and covered with moss and weeds, and the water which had covered the surface was a green and stagnant mass. Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, raised an obelisk to the memory of her husband; it was and is a fine pillar, but it was then half covered with the clinging ivy, and the long inscription, which is engraven on one side, was nearly illegible. The ceiling of the hall of Blenheim House is painted; the Duke of Marlborough is drawn standing, pointing with his sword to the plains of Blenheim, of which he was then the victor. The picture room is to the left, and leads from the hall; some pictures of ladies were there, which had better have been omitted, as it does not tend to raise

the character of the nobility, when such meet the eye of the stranger. Infamy is infamy, be it ever so exalted, and the great, the honoured, and the good, were in bad company, when placed by the side of the mistresses of the Dukes of Marlborough. Almost all the apartments leading to the saloon were superbly furnished, but the moth and spider, undisturbed, revelled in the splendour which could not banish sorrow from the heart of its lord. The then duke of Marlborough was far advanced in life, and had been for some years incapable of superintending his affairs, and his family, as is but too often the case, thought only of their own pursuits, without reflecting that, by injuring him, they were ruining themselves. The sides of the saloon present the costumes of different nations, from the polished European to the Hottentot savage; and, like the hall, the ceiling is painted, but the subjects are different ones. Peace is staying the hero in the height of his glory, and Time is rapidly passing over every thing human; three drawing-rooms tapestried, and having like the others some rare paintings, led to the library, where many thousands of volumes were accumulated, but the worm had found its way through the pages, and dust obscured the golden bindings. In the china room, the porcelain of Dresden and Sevres was confusedly huddled together, and bore the same marks of neglect as the rest of the apartments. The chapel is much too small, it does not correspond in size with the rest of the building, and, as it has a large monument, the basso relievo of which represents the Duke taking Marshal Taillard prisoner, the violation of proportional rule is very visible. The menagerie was in the same state as the rest, and contained very few animals that were deserving of notice. The gardens

were well laid out, but weeds overran them, and the shattered boats, on the nearly dry lake, spoke a tale that could not be misunderstood.

Mr. Leclerc seated himself on the trunk of a fallen tree, and addressed his cousin in Spanish, which language he was certain the butler who had attended them did not understand: "When we contemplate this devastated place, Alfred, we cannot but feel the instability of everything human. Little more than a century has elapsed since this magnificent edifice first reared its head, and its owner was then in the plenitude of fame and grandeur. The general now reposes in the grave, and his possessions are deteriorated in the hands of his heirs. If the observations of historians are true, his Grace acted ungratefully towards James II., and treacherously by his successor. He is, too, accused of indulging the miserable dissipative passion, avarice; if he did, we here see to what effect. Had there been less to dissipate, the family might have still possessed unencumbered estates, while the general's memory would, on that score, have been free from reproach. True is the declaration, 'He heapeth up riches, but cannot tell who shall gather them.' His ingratitude was visited upon him by the undeserved contempt and mortifications which were manifested and cast upon him by the Tory ministry of Queen Anne. Here we see all that this generation can do of him whose very name was equal to an army; he sleeps in dust; and it matters little what is said of him by the busy sons of men; their praise will not give him pleasure, neither will their censure pain him—he is beyond both. This will be the same to all who now tread the face of the habitable globe; if distinguished, they will be spoken of, if not, they will pass through

life in oblivion. After death it will not be of importance to them which it was, if their conduct was regulated by the laws of God."

"Very true, Arthur; but, for my life, I cannot see the point of your remarks."

"Perhaps not. You acknowledge that lord Marlborough was the greatest politician and warrior of his time?"

Mr. Alfred Leclerc bowed his head.

"His fame endures, but with his life it was lost to him. He could not return from the grave to enjoy it; then, Alfred, if his time on earth had been spent in vicious indulgence, in a sensual and debauched manner, of what would it have availed him that by men he was caressed and honoured? before God the humble peasant and the lordly Marlborough were equal. We know that his Grace possessed many estimable qualities and virtues, more than sufficient to excuse his faults towards men, and, as his latter years were spent in quiet retirement, he had ample opportunity of seeking for that pardon from the Almighty which every man, that ever existed, needs and must receive, before he can quit this world in peace. Every thing that occurs is for our admonition; if the wealth, the renown, the honours of Lord Marlborough could not prolong his existence, or the remembrance of them preserve his property from devastation, neither will our youth, our strength, or our rank, preserve us from death. The termination of our earthly career will come; no man can be so presumptuous as to say that he is prepared for it; but it is the duty of all to try to be so. Some persons say that they are unworthy; if said in truth, these are those who are most worthy, but it is to be feared that this humility is too often

affected, and is another name for not wishing to take the trouble of becoming good. 'Many,' said a clergyman, I forget who, 'many say they are not good enough, but do they wish to be better?'—I fear, Alfred, that he spoke the truth. You cannot defend your bad habits, but it is too great a sacrifice to resign them, it is irksome and tedious to be moral and religious."

Mr. Alfred reddened, his cousin continued.

"But we are taught that there will be no gaming-houses, there will be no taverns, that there will be no females of loose character in heaven, nor will oaths, bad language, and evil thoughts, be suffered there."

"And will balls, plays, and novels be allowed?" enquired Mr. Alfred, rather sarcastically.

"No. And we may suppose that they who do not receive pleasure from them are most fitted for a better and happier world; but here we are permitted to participate in innocent enjoyments: you know that I am not an advocate of those things, but people will have some relaxation. If they do not have that which is innocent, they will resort to more hurtful modes of passing their time. If the ball-room did not lead to improper acquaintances, to scandal and to malice, it would be perfectly innoxious. From compositions which are not avowedly improper many persons may derive instruction: the worst fault of imaginative writing is that it is imaginative; we are led, as it were, beyond human nature, and it is only drinking largely of worldly knowledge that sobers us again. We find baseness in the peer, impropriety in the female angel, and we prove rustic innocence and village happiness to be indeed a poet's dream."

"For an author, my cousin, you are a very sober one."

Mr. L. smiled. "If, Alfred, we did not meet bad characters at a theatre, and were not loose plays permitted, we might, as an amusement, pronounce it a harmless one; it might be made a monitor, but then it would not be so much patronized by those who—let them take shame to themselves—fill its most prominent parts with the outcasts of society, and support those of its performers whose best claim to their favour consists in their utter abandonment."

Mr. Alfred rose. "Enough! you have said enough, my cousin! henceforth I hope to make a good use of my time, while I enjoy it. I will patronize neither actresses nor prize fighters, but try to live like a reasonable being."

The steward, a polite and sensible man, now approached, and enquired if they would take any refreshment? They declined seeing any of the family, but drank some of his Grace's ale, which had been bottled many years, and was very powerful.

"In this our day," said Mr. Leclerc, as he again looked at the picture of lord Marlborough, "we have as great a general as the duke, and, as he excels his Grace in the virtues of the mind, I venture to predict for him a different fate; he will long live in the estimation of his countrymen, honoured, beloved, and revered."

But the prophecy of Mr. Leclerc has failed, and the Duke of Wellington has received from the people of England nearly the same treatment that his predecessor experienced. It is true that public opinion is reverting to its former channel, and in all probability his Grace will again become the idol of the multitude, but the past is convincing; if the greatest public characters cannot find happiness in themselves, they must

not seek it in the world, for assuredly if they do they will not find it. In electing him their Chancellor, the members of the University of Oxford have conferred upon the Duke of Wellington a new and signal honour, and if the presiding over an ecclesiastical establishment fix his Grace in his opinion of the importance of real personal religion, he will have reason to esteem the twenty-ninth of January the happiest, as well as the proudest, of the many days with which his name will be connected to the end of time.

After conversing a short time with the steward, the cousins presented the servants with the accustomed gratuity, and rode on to Oxford.

CHAPTER XI.

St. John's college is one of the best endowed of the colleges of Oxford, the monks of St. Bernard were its original inhabitants ; but it was purchased, in 1555. by Sir Thomas White, lord-mayor of London, and the fellows are principally those that are chosen from the Merchant Tailors' school. Mr. Leclerc had some business with one of the B. A.'s and invited him and two of the senior undergraduates to spend the evening with him and his cousin. They consented, and general literature and politics became the topics of discourse. One of the gentlemen, who had been in Scotland, obliged his companions by singing some of the national airs, with the native accent, which so much increases their effect. Mr. Leclerc was a superior instrumental performer, and, at the request of his cousin, he played 'O Nannie, wilt thou gang wi' me,' and 'Auld Lang Syne.'

"You act up to the spirit of that, Mr. Leclerc," said the gentleman on whom he had called, "do you remember poor ——"

• "What, one of the Taberdors* of Queen's?"

* The Taberdors are so called from short gowns they wear reaching to the knee. Their duty is to wait on the Fellows at the table

"Yes; he has gone to Africa."

"Was he? poor fellow, he was quite overcome by the remarks of that beautiful, but spoiled, child of fortune, Lady Cecilia M——: he was stupid enough to believe himself a favourite of her ladyship's, until her satirical sketches opened his eyes. The last time I saw him was at Stanton-Harcourt, and he then railed most unmercifully at his parents, for placing him in a situation where he must see, but not be allowed to mingle with, those of distinguished birth, as an equal, and the galling nature of his situation was too much for his spirits."

"Lady Cecilia has been pretty well punished," observed the gentleman: "she married her cousin, and, although a duchess, she would, I fancy, be very happy to exchange situations with the wife of our humble friend; he married a very amiable young female, the daughter of a schoolmaster."

"I am glad to hear it," replied Mr. L.; "I warned him of Lady Cecilia, at the time."

"Yes; he said you did, and he always speaks highly of you for it. By the way, Mr. Leclerc, have you seen the papers of to-day?"

"I have not; is there any particular news?"

"A paragraph about Lieutenant Ellison. I suppose you heard that, nine months after he entered the service, he was suspended for twelve months. That

where they are obliged to stand with their thumbs crossed. The origin of this custom was that one of their body once attempted to stab a Fellow against whom he cherished some dislike. He had concealed the instrument in the sleeve of his gown, and, to prevent a repetition of the occurrence, they were ordered to keep their hands in the position mentioned. The class and custom do not extend to any of the other colleges of Oxford.

period expired, and he rejoined his ship, and went to Malta; there he had a quarrel with the captain of a merchant vessel, fought a duel, had his arm broken, and is again in so much disgrace that nothing but his high connections could save him from an exemplary punishment."

Mr. Leclerc said nothing, but looked at his cousin, who did not speak much during the remainder of the evening.

"Can any one tell," he exclaimed suddenly, "why there should be the figures of a dog and cat snarling at each other over the altar-piece at your college? Is it intended as a symbol of the harmony that exists there?"

"I suppose so," replied the youngest of the party - "but I dare say it was a whim of the artist's, not a very decorous one, truly."

"No, I think not," said Mr. L.; "I would give my voice for their removal." He looked at his watch as he spoke, and, finding it was past eleven, rose; and his friends, bidding them good night, returned to their own college.

Mr. Leclerc found his cousin employed in perusing Dr. Kippis's *Biographia Britannica*, when he joined him at the breakfast table.

"It is a long time since I have found you so well engaged, Alfred."

"I told you, my cousin, that, under God's grace, I would commence a different course; and I am much indebted to you for the party of last night. I was interested in the subjects discussed, and entertained by the talent and obliging disposition of your friends. I derived more real pleasure than in any of my mad excesses, and I have awakened this morning free from remorse, nausea, and head-ache."

“ I am very happy to hear you say so. We, Alfred, who are not restrained in our pecuniary matters, and have at our command the means of gratifying every proper pursuit, ought to be more thankful for it than to dissipate our fortune, and injure ourselves, by spending our property in riot.”

“ Get your breakfast, Arthur, and then tell me why I was sent here, to meet and yield to temptation ?”

When the servant removed the breakfast cloth, Mr. Leclerc threw open the window, and entered into a long conversation with his cousin :

“ An university may be considered an epitome of the world; and there are four classes of persons to whom it is dangerous. Those who, like Mr. Ellison, have been educated in the habitual disregard of the prescriptions of religion, and who are warped by luxury and self-love. They come here, and they find others worse than themselves : they have been accustomed to self-indulgence, they have seen their parents plunge into error; and, having no guide, either of the heart or of experience, they yield to the suggestions of their passions, and become open, hardened, and irreclaimable, reprobates. Then there are others, my dear Alfred, who, like yourself, have received a moral, but only a moral, education. Upon entering, for the first time, into society, you find yourselves surrounded by every thing that can fascinate the senses : wit, mirth, and splendour, captivate the mind, and you seize on the promised good, little thinking that you stand on the brink of fearful error. Again, even in this age, there are parents who educate their children in a manner more befitting the gloomy ages of monkish superstition, or of puritanical fanaticism. They forbid the most innocent amusements—the pages of the heathen philoso-

phers and poets are prohibited—perhaps justly ; but even the ennobling writings of Pope and Addison, Steele, and our other writers, whose names will for ever shed glory on our country, are sealed books. Those songs, which charmed us last night, would be styled profane ; and the gay dance, even in the best society, would be an abomination. With such ideas, a youth is sent to an University. He meets with many estimable men, and finds them patrons of those arts which tend to humanize mankind. Perhaps the female relatives of his tutor are learning to dance, or charm the ear with their well-executed pieces. He is surprized at this, and begins to find himself wrong in some things ; his bad companions, and his own evil passions, whisper that all else is as innocent as that he once believed to be sinful, but which he now finds to be even laudable. He listens to the suggestions, and falls, by the very means that were invented to preserve him from ruin. In the fourth class we may rank the credulous, and those who are deficient in intellect : the one believes all that is told him, and the other is led astray because he has not sense enough to see the difference between amusement and error. To these an university life is a dangerous one, but not so much so as the world at large. When a young man enters into society, he is beset with temptations, and he has no one to warn him : here, the daily services of religion are so many admonitions ; and, if the tutors are not very remiss, he must receive some checks from them. I am free to own that the system is susceptible of improvement. One great oversight is allowing the under-graduates to have supper in their own rooms. At first sight this seems a simple circumstance ; but the practice is rife with,

mischief. A party of seven or ten assemble in the apartments of one, who, to be hospitable, must have his table covered with luxuries, and the most curious wines. His guests cannot refuse to partake of them; and, after the table is cleared, cards are introduced, and every bad passion is excited by the alternate changes of the game. Intoxication, swearing, and perhaps, pugilistic encounters, are the results; and at four or five o'clock they reel off to bed, or spend the remainder of the night, or, rather, morning, in search of adventures among those who, but for such as they, would not have become the outcasts of their own sex, and the contempt of ours. The first consequence of this system is inability to understand and attend to the lectures and exercises which are given them: for it is an undeniable fact that intemperance, of either kind, dulls the intellectual faculties, and prevents that clearness of mind which is necessary, in order that we may appreciate those subjects to which our thoughts are called. Next, the health is injured, sometimes irremediably: late hours never fail to hurt the eyes, and affect the mind, as want of rest produces fever, excess of wine palls the appetite, and renders us unable to relish solid food. We have no wish for breakfast when the night has been spent in drinking. I need scarcely say that, while proper aliment sustains the constitution, ardent spirits and strong wine entirely disorganize it. The next, and not least, of the evils, is the lavish expenditure consequent upon such a mode of life, and the disputes in which it involves you with your friends: besides the negligence of your tradesmen in supplying you with inferior articles, when you do not pay cash. These are three of the results of supping in your own rooms;

and, had I my way, I would prohibit it directly."

"Suppose we would not let you?" said Mr. Alfred, smiling.

"I would see to that."

"If we did not sup here, we should at an inn, so that way we should be equal."

"But I would institute a new species of punishment. I would abolish fines; that is 'taxing the father for the misconduct of the son:' in place of it I would substitute a peculiar kind of dress, which would at once prove who had been the offender."

"Psha! my dear Arthur! How long would it be worn?"

"Perhaps not long; but as dress is the mark of distinction, so ought it to be of degradation. I do not approve either of lessons or themes being assigned as a task; it is calculated to produce an abhorrence of science, and is rather impolitic. The youth who will not learn, without being forced, might as well remain a dunce, his learning will do him little good."

"What kind of dress would you assign to the delinquent," enquired Mr. Alfred; "any one resembling the dresses of the condemned victims of the *Auto de fé*?"

"Ridicule is a good weapon, Alfred; and I have often wondered how you, who so well know how to use it, should ever be foiled by it; in administering justice, we should always remember that anything ludicrous detracts from its solemnity. You must have been aware of what my answer would be, when you referred to the disgusting masquerade dresses of the unhappy victims of intolerance. In the maritime service, the yellow flag signifies disease; I would make the offending collegian wear a yellow dress, as a sym-

bol of the contagion of folly, in which he should appear, or otherwise he should confine himself to his own apartments; in which case, solitude might induce reflection, and reflection promote amendment. We may believe that the terror of being held up as an object of ridicule would operate even more effectually than the fear of a very heavy punishment; and, as is the case in courts martial, I would have the offence and sentence read to the students, who might in that way be deterred from following the example of their companion."

Mr. Alfred laughed, as he replied, "This fool's cap plan is a curious one, certainly, but I do not think it a very feasible one. Suppose your offending student, instead of confining himself to his room, was to make his escape, and pass the time of his probation in some of the adjoining villages?"

"In that case he should never return."

"How would you ascertain his departure?"

"From his attendants; and, if they refused to speak the truth, I would dismiss them from their offices."

"This would be to turn our Universities into prisons, and to render them hateful, from the system of espionage which would be established."

"It would be so, Alfred; for the good of its members, and, to render it effectual, it ought to be general: constituted as the colleges now are, it is entirely the conduct of the head that promotes the welfare, or assists in the demoralization, of the pupils. I am inclined to think that, were there a greater degree of responsibility, the duties of president, &c., would be more efficiently discharged, and we should hear fewer complaints than we now do. Were all like Dr. M---, we should be certain that the reproofs were unmerited,

but to assert that they are entirely so is to confound the vigilant with the supine, and to award the same meed of praise to those who carelessly attend to their duty as to those who have earnestly sought to promote the good of those who are placed under them. To conceal the truth is always disingenuous, and implies that we fear to reveal it, I have never, therefore, tried to disguise the errors of any part of any of our establishments; they are human, therefore imperfect, and we ought to be grateful to those who wish to improve them. But it is difficult to decide who are friends, and the only way to guard against the machinations of our enemies is for ourselves to correct whatever we know to be wrong, and to supply what is deficient. If we do this, we may bid defiance to open foes and false friends."

"You are right, Arthur. But I do wish I had never come to England, I was happy enough in India, and I do not know how I shall face my father; he told me to take back an uncorrupted mind; I cannot conceal my disobedience, for my bills speak for themselves."

"And for the baseness of their makers-out, Alfred; there is no set of people in the world I so much dislike as the tradesmen of military, naval, and collegiate towns; they know that, in general, their customers are able to pay them, and they force their commodities upon the bewildered purchaser with unblushing pertinacity. I have been provoked, beyond measure, when I have seen them display their wares, and tease those to take them who really did not want them. I went into a shop once for a number of 'The Gentleman's Magazine,' and the bookseller immediately covered the counter with volumes, which he requested me to inspect. I told him I did not require any, but

in vain; he had more coming down in the afternoon, and he would take the liberty of sending them, if I should honour him by selecting any, I need not trouble myself to pay for them, until it suited me. This, you will say, was a very liberal offer, but I doubt if it would have been made had he not thought he would lose nothing by it. I was so pestered with horse-dealers, wine merchants, linen-drappers, and money-lenders, and others, that at last I was compelled to be rude to them all; there is no other way of shaking them off. I think if a law was passed declaring that no tradesmen or other person should recover, on any account whatever, a debt contracted by the person sued, while under twenty-one, it would have a very beneficial effect; we should not have so many ruined parents, and spendthrift sons."

"I believe you are right; yet in some cases it would operate unjustly; I wish, Arthur, that I had had your reputation to protect me."

Mr. L. did not make any reply, for he did not wish to appear egotistical, but the truth was his reputation had afforded him no protection; on the contrary, many sought his acquaintance, thinking that, if they could rally him out of notions which they termed methodistical, they would achieve a great victory. Mr. L. mused for an instant, then asked his cousin what was the aggregate of the sums he owed?

"About £500."

"O, very moderate, considering the way in which you have lived; I can frame a plan by which your father need never know any thing of this. What allowance have you from him?"

"Why, £450 per annum."

"A too liberal one, Alfred. Have you lent money?"

"Yes, but I shall never ask for it."

"It would, perhaps, be useless if you did. I will pay your debts, and free you from the annoyance of these people, and you can repay me whenever you choose."

"I never can make you amends, Arthur! What untiring kindness have you manifested towards me!"

"It will be amply repaid, my dear cousin, if I have the happiness of seeing you at peace with yourself, and truly enjoying life."

Mr. L. had many of these conversations with his cousin, whose reformation was gradual, but sure. When he left, Mr. Leclerc sent Alfred some books from London, and on the fly-leaf of one was written the following verses:—

Oxford! some spirits at thy altar [caught;
Have bent, have broken—some divine intelligence have
And in the paths of good did never falter,
But many erring, wayward, souls have brought
To God, that God to whom,
By pious hands, was raised thy noblest dome.
St. Mary's beauteous structure, noble aisle,
Baliol, Wadham, and ———, your college,
Christchurch, the aristocratic pile,
Exeter, All Souls, all, all seats of knowledge—
Granted. True piety, morality, say you?
My cousin—is it true?
Well, we are mortals all,
Our follies, follies of humanity.
The heir, when he doth leave his father's hall,
Finds plenty here to please his vanity—
Horses and hunters,* ladies, cards, wine, and mirth,
Say, can he think of aught else upon earth?

* "I would not," said a gentleman, "send my son to Cambridge; the rascals race there: they are so near Newmarket, they only hunt and race."

Mutation is life's order. Should they who praise,
 Flatter, caress, and court thee now,
 Cease to do so, should sorrow cloud thy days,
 Should health again decay, care mark thy brow,
 Remember me. Your summons I'll attend,
 And you shall find at least one changeless friend.

A few weeks after, Mr. L. received a letter from his cousin, and enclosed were the following verses, which were headed

TO MY FIRST INSTRUCTOR.

Gather life's roses where they bloom,
 Smile with the free, and hear the crowd applaud;
 Let every pleasure aid and banish gloom,
 Still know thyself the sovereign lord
 Of hearts that melt in deepest woe,
 When from the spot, which you adorn, you go.

Aside thy sovereign take thy place,
 Before him bend the knee,
 And he will wish that you may grace
 His court, his next levee—
 Ah! happy thou,
 Be ever blest as now!

Quit the gay, festive scene [the land;
 Your seat to take among the learn'd and honour'd of
 Not much less noble than thyself, I ween,
 Are they that now around thee stand
 Thy lessons to receive,
 Fresh laurels for thy brow to weave.

Oh, Britain! bless thy noblest son,
 Still let him prosperous be;
 For he full well his task hath done,
 And much he honoureth thee—
 Had all thy children been like him,
 Thy glories never had been dim.

All that the world can give, or e'er hath given.

All joy in life, and strongest hope of heaven,

Be yours. Your heart, ne'er riven

By base ingratitude, your life no leaven

Know, no pain, no care,

But ever be you what you are.

And Thou, All gracious God ! who marked my wandering,

Who saw me, reckless of my life and fame, [course

Proceed in vice, 'long road from one bad path to worse !

Nor care of friends and fortune what became—

O grant the blessing which I trembling ask—

Ne'er let him weary of his glorious task.

But still awake the slumbering, and the meek,

Rebuke bold vice, though in a palace found,

Console the wanderer, re-assure the weak,

And banish folly from his native ground.

And thus, for aye, a model let him live,

Of all the virtues which thy grace may give.

After much reflection, Alfred determined to take orders ; and, after some trouble, he convinced his cousin that, whatever he might have been, he was not now deficient in those virtues, moral and religious, which ought to form the character of those who aspire to be the ministers of God. " Lest, after having preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away," was the observation of St. Paul, and Mr. A. L. felt it in all its force. Happily for him, his past life had not been the worst, and, retracing his steps, he had the consolation of reflecting that he had not led any one into error. He had been 'more sinned against than sinning.' He was greatly pleased with the situation of Crayston-hall, and, as Mr. Fitzmaurice was acquainted with the family who inhabited it, he spent much of his time there. When he returned to Richmond, he occasionally visited some of his college friends, and it

was on one of these excursions that he saw and remarked Gertrude and her party. He met Mr. Ellison after he left them, and endeavoured to convince him of the error of the course which they had once jointly pursued. Mr. E. was highly incensed, and they never afterwards met, until he encountered him in Haslar wood.

From being much prejudiced against him, Mrs. L. became much attached to her nephew, to whom she confessed herself indebted, under heaven, for the reformation of her son. The difference of the climate rendered Mrs. L. subject to rheumatism, from an attack of which she was suffering when Gertrude called, who, fatally for herself, concluded her the wife of the only person she ever really loved.

Alfred went through the divinity examinations with credit. His cousin rejoiced to hear it, but involuntarily drew himself up, when he spoke of signing the declaration required of her clergy by the Church of England.

"What! still stumbling at predestination, Arthur!"

"If you believe it, my cousin, it is all very well."

"I, Arthur, do not presume to set up my judgment in opposition to that of those eminent men by whom the articles were framed. But I think that it was unjust to refuse you a degree."

"Not at all, Alfred. There were two courses: if I believed those doctrines, there was the usual honour for me—if I did not believe them, I had no right to that distinction which is conferred solely upon those who do, or who profess to believe them."

"You are more contented than I should be, under similar circumstances; but perhaps you care little for it; indeed, any distinction which could be given to you would add little to your honour."

"But, as being the sign and seal of learning, they are valuable."

"Perhaps, when a few more years are passed away, I may take D.C.L. to my name, though that degree, in the eyes of many, has lost much of its value since it was conferred upon that very erudite, moral and feeling, monarch, Christian VII., and others like him."

"Why, truly, it is not very pleasant to feel oneself placed on a level with such; but, his soul is before another tribunal now, and we will let him rest in peace."

"True," rejoined Mr. L., "is it a fact that your sister is to be Mrs. Fitzmaurice?"

"It seems so: this is a curious world Charles and I were going to cut one another's throats, at one time, and now we are to be brothers."

"It is somewhat singular; but the alliance is, on many accounts, desirable; as Mr. F. is to receive a situation at Calcutta, and as you mean to return to India, you will be united to your family, which will be agreeable to you; but, I do not know what I shall do when you are gone. I fancy I must become an M. P., to drive away melancholy."

"Aye, why do you not? the leading men of the county were talking of offering you the representation should Sir John take office."

"Which I dare say he will; if he does, I certainly will not again deny them; it would appear too much like realizing the old proverb."

Sir John did accept a government employment, and Mr. L. was returned, by a large majority, to the House of Commons, where, like all Hon. Members, he sometimes pleased and sometimes displeased his constituents, by the way in which he voted; for, as he

abided by his principles and supported whatever he thought right, he was not likely always to be a favourite with those who were ever crying for change, without considering whether it was expedient. The Rev. Mr. Leclerc requested his cousin's permission to dedicate his work to him; but, it was not published until after the author quitted England with his mother and Mr. and Mrs. Fitzmurice. Mr. L. parted with his relations with great regret, and made them promise to write often: he sent his picture and a very polite letter to his uncle, who listened with astonishment to his son's description of Mr. L., and instantly wrote an affectionate and grateful letter to him.

When Mr. L. told Alfred he could repay him whenever it was convenient, it was with the wish of inducing his cousin to form habits of prudence: when Mr. Alfred offered him the money, he refused to accept it; and, equally determined, Mr. Alfred sent it to different charities in sums of £50 each. When he returned to Calcutta, he made a full confession to his father; and the Lieut-Col., in no way deficient in gratitude, sent his nephew some curious ornaments, which, to the speculator, were worth £1500, while to the man of taste they were invaluable.

Corresponding with these new found relations formed the pleasure of his life; and no incident of importance had disturbed it, until the death of Gertrude revived the most melancholy recollections. Mrs. Leclerc had been much attached to her, and her death re-called his mother's to his memory; the acute sufferings of Mr. E. and the misery in which he had involved Gertrude and his friends, pained Mr. L., he could not bear the villa, and the fatigue of attending business in the House of Commons was insupportable. Dr. M. had de-

elined staying with him, being employed in tracing out one of Gertrude's cousins and, unable to endure the place, he resolved to quit it and travel for a time. He had visited almost the whole of England, and he was undecided as to where he should proceed, when he saw an advertisement speaking highly of a vessel chartered for Normandy, which was to call at Jersey. After some hesitation he went to the vessel, and finding her a really commodious, although a small, one, and the master a respectable man, he engaged a passage for himself and two servants, for Jersey. There were three other passengers; but, the only one that excited his attention was a young lady, apparently not more than six-and-twenty, who was attended by her maid. She came on deck after breakfast, and sat on the cables which were coiled near the rudder, her attendant supported her while one of her hands rested on the companion hatch; her hair was pushed back under a large cap which half concealed her face, but could not hide its pallid hue, and a very large shawl enveloped her attenuated frame. As the vessel was but eighty-four tons' burthen, although, as is always the case, she carried more than was registered, there was not much room to spare, and the passengers were frequently in each other's way; as though by mutual consent, they left the lady and her servant one side of the after-deck and contented themselves with the other. Mr. L. frequently gazed on the young and suffering creature, as she lay, almost lifeless, in the arms of her attendant; but, when a faint blush coloured her wan cheek, he could not divest himself of the idea that he had seen her somewhere. Her sunken, but beautiful, blue eyes were familiar to him whenever she opened them, and the waving of her

ringlets, when they escaped from the large cap, reminded him of something he had seen before. As she never noticed any one, Mr. L. did not wish to intrude upon her; but, observing her very ill the third morning he was on board, he handed a glass of red port to the servant and requested her to offer it to her mistress. She declined it; and, closing her eyes as she rejected it, Mr. L. did not press it. In the afternoon she appeared rather better, and, wishing to ascertain who she was, he asked the young woman if her lady had not better have a chair, as the cables might be damp.

"No, I thank you, sir," the young woman answered, "there is a piece of board under the cushion, and my mistress cannot bear the fatigue of sitting in a chair."

While he spoke to the female he kept his eyes fixed upon her mistress; and, as the colour flushed her cheeks, he became certain that he had seen her. She looked distressed by his glances: he had never before stared any female out of countenance; and, blushing himself, he hurriedly said,

"I beg your pardon, madam; but I am convinced that I have had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"You must be mistaken, sir," she faintly articulated, "I have not the least recollection of you."

"I may be wrong; but I do not think I am. Did I see you at Abingdon some years since?"

"No, sir, I was never there. I have resided at Cheltenham and Clifton, and I have lived in London and at —, in Surrey."

"It was at none of those places that I ever saw you."

"I have passed much of my time in public places; you may have seen me at the theatres or any public assembly."

"No, madam; for I seldom go to any."

The young lady was silent for an instant, and then said, "Perhaps you knew me in Wales."

Mr. Leclerc started; and immediately said, "I remember now—Miss Vernon, the near relative of the Rev. Mr. Morgan."

She bowed her head.

"Your grandfather?" said Mr. L., in an enquiring tone.

"He died some years ago. I do not recollect you, sir."

"Probably not; you were very young then, you were talking with your brother when I spoke to you, and I staid all night with my groom. In the morning you told your grandfather you had joined your brother in plucking pears and daises."

Miss Vernon smiled faintly. "I know you now, sir, Mr. ——"

"Leclerc," said Mr. L.

"Yes; my dear grandfather often spoke of you; will you excuse me, sir, I cannot talk."

"Certainly; I perceive that you are very ill: when your spirits are better, I will do myself the pleasure of conversing with you."

Miss Vernon spoke little during the day; in the evening her servant came to him, and asked if he was going to France or Jersey? He replied the latter.

"Then sir, Miss V. must beg you will call on her, here is her address; she may be better when she is at home, now she is not strong enough to converse."

"No, certainly I will have the pleasure of calling, but if she would take a little wine, it would benefit her."

"She fears, sir, that it would hurt her head, else she does take it by her doctor's orders."

During the remainder of the passage, Miss V. confined herself to the small cabin allotted to her, and did not come upon deck, until the vessel entered the harbour, which, for the size, is good, and accounted very safe. Miss Vernon appeared much stronger, she walked without assistance, and spoke cheerfully, as she said, "I will bid you good morning, Mr. L., you will, I suppose, take up your abode at St. Helier, I reside a short distance from it, and you will experience little difficulty in finding my abode."

Mr. L. bowed. "Allow me to hold your hand, while you descend into the boat; ships are awkward places for ladies." Miss V. smiled, but, before she could speak, one of the sailors lifted her down.

"Arrah, fait," he said, as he jumped over the bulwarks, "but the lady's as light as a feather; sure, if it warn't for her rigging, she'd be no wheight at all."

Mr. L. could not avoid smiling, his hands and garments were stained with tar, and Miss V.'s dress bore marks of it.

"I must not be offended," she said, when Mr. L. seated himself next her, "he meant no injury; the master told me he took him from Ireland some time ago; his father had a fishing vessel once, but had sold her, and become very poor. I have been on board before, and he brought me new eggs, and fresh fish on several occasions. I asked him once what his father had done with his boat? he half laughed, and half cried, as he said, 'Dirty water on him, my lady, by the law, he dhrunk her away.'"

"A very significant reply, Miss; his countrymen are not deficient in good sense."

"O, no, and this lad is clever: the lady who owns the vessel did not know what to do with her, and he

picked his cap to atoms, as he said, 'Fait, ma'm, put her in your pocket.'"

"Very good advice; ships and houses just now are at a discount."

By this time they reached the shore, Mr. L. offered Miss V. his arm, but she bade him good day, and was assisted in a light spring cart, by an elderly and respectable looking man.

The islands of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark, are much less known than they deserve to be; the soil of all is fertile, and the air salubrious; Guernsey is the largest and finest, but it is not so valuable as Jersey, which is much better cultivated, and more populous. The language of the people of the four islands is French, but their religion is Protestant, and they are within the diocese of the Bishop of Winchester. The number of the inhabitants of Jersey, in 1786, was 20,000, it is probably now double that number, as the capital town of St. Helier has increased from four hundred houses to seven hundred, and the other parishes have been proportionably enlarged. The quality of the honey produced in Jersey can scarcely be excelled, and the fish and *field fowl have been pronounced matchless by competent judges. Tillage is too much neglected, but the cider, which is made from their large and well flavoured apples, is superior to much that is made in England. The dialect of the common people is scarcely intelligible, as they mingle English with French words, and they retain the accent of the latter, but their manners are simple, and they are clean and industrious. They still knit great quantities of caps and stockings, and carry on a profitable trade with Newfoundland and England, and send many vessels to the Mediterranean, where they dis-

pose of their cargoes to great advantage. The governor, who is generally a military officer of rank, is appointed by the king, and resides in the castle; a bailiff and twelve jurats, preside over the civil administration of the island, which retains the old feudal forms; justice is mostly well dispensed, and the people are happy and at ease. Their principal plague is the toads, which in this island are uncommonly large and very venomous. During the French Revolution, many persons escaped from St. Malo and resided there, and many a French peeress, who has shone in the drawing-rooms of the unhappy Marie Antoinette, thought herself happy when sheltered beneath the humble roof of the Jersey peasant.

Mr. L. was pleased that he had visited it; he engaged apartments at the house of a respectable widow, and, a week after his arrival, he left, to pay his promised visit to Miss Vernon. He found her house situated in one of the rich vallies with which those island abounds; sheep and other cattle were browsing, and the little children, who were minding them, clad in dark brown frocks and blue aprons, were likewise knitting and singing some of the old Norman ballads, which still preserve their place in the memories of the common people. Mr. L. caught some words which might be rendered, in English, 'The king will come some time. Prepare your bonnets, and bring wreaths. We will salute him, As did our lords of old, Be the name of the Carterets, Ever remembered, And inay Coesarea,* Ever be true to her king.' Mr. L. gave them some silver, and opened the wicker gate, which

* The ancient name for Jersey. The Carterets protected Charles II.

led to the house, beside which the trees were bending with the weight of their luxuriant fruit.

The same young woman who had attended Miss V. admitted him, and ushered him into a room where she requested he would wait, while she apprised her mistress of his arrival. Notwithstanding many changes of fortune, Miss V. retained her partiality for net curtains, they still adorned her windows, but the blue satin and silver ornaments were wanting, nevertheless, the room was well furnished. An Indian mat covered the floor, and an open piano proved that its mistress was not a stranger to harmony. Some gold fish were swimming in a large glass globe, and some plain china jars contained some fragrant shrubs. A large glass was placed over the mantel piece, and facing it were two pictures, one of which was an engraving of the Last Judgment, and the other, a well painted representation of Badmington-Magna, the seat of the Duke of Beaufort, Gloucestershire. The back window commanded a view of the land, which, at the south side of Jersey, is level with the sea; and the fresh breeze, sweeping over, made the scene refreshingly cool; a fine cat, who seemed not to feel the burning heat of the sun, was basking in its beams, and a Newfoundland dog wagged his tail, and did not seem to dislike Mr. Leclerc's occupancy of his mistress' parlour, but when he laid his hand on a book, which was open on a reading-table, the dog jumped through the open window, and caught the skirts of his coat. "Go down," said Mr. L., glancing at the book, "go down, sir;" but the animal would not be appeased until he laid the book on the table. As he did so, Miss V. entered, and apologized for her absence.

"I beg you will not name it, Madam; but I have no objection to lose the company of your dog."

Miss V. smiled, and threw a bunch of carnations out of the window, the dog jumped after them, and Miss V. then shut it down. Laura wore a white muslin dress, and a blue silk shawl, although the weather was hot; she had a lace handkerchief thrown over her head, and did not appear too warm.

"Had I known you were coming to-day, Mr. L., I would have been ready to receive you; perhaps you will not dislike some of our island cyder." Although not very partial to it, Mr. L. drank some to oblige her, and then said, "I fear I fatigue you now, you will allow me depart, without taking tea."

"O, no," said Miss Vernon; "I am quite myself, after these few days' rest; if you have not any more agreeable engagement, I shall be gratified if you will favour me with your society, as long as may be convenient."

Mr. L. had his hand on the volume which he had first taken up; Miss V. smiled, as she said, "I have often thought that an author's feelings must be very curious, when he sees his own writing in the houses of acquaintances or strangers."

Mr. L. looked at the title, and smiled. "Mine were even painful, Miss V., when I first saw my first printed volume on the library table of a nobleman, whom I visited, and I do not see any now without a start; I certainly did not expect to find any here."

"That was my grandfather's; he never heard any work of yours announced but he immediately sent for it. I am sorry to say that I did not value them as I ought, it is only within these five years that I have read your compositions, but they have now become so familiar to me that I do not feel their author a stranger."

Mr. L. bowed; he wished to ask after her brother, and grandfather, but, as she did not name them, politeness repressed his curiosity. At the tea-table he was introduced to the Rev. Mr. Lempriere and his wife, with whom Miss V. said she boarded, and he then attributed her disinclination to speak of herself to a remembrance of suffering, rather than of error, which he had at first feared. Mr. Lempriere was the same person who had waited for Miss V. at St. Helier, and the attention they paid to her proved that they respected her. Mrs. Lempriere was short and thin. her volubility was excessive, and appeared a terrible infliction to Miss V., who leant back in an arm chair, and frequently smiled at the lady's mistakes. It was almost impossible to do otherwise, she was English, and spoke, or rather murdered, the language. She immediately became intimate with Mr. L., when Miss V. said who he was.

"My husband, sir, alas has your books, when he can get him, he says you are an equivalent writer."

This remark convulsed Miss Vernon, and Mr. Leclerc, unable to smother his laughter, turned over his tea, and, while the old lady was busy in repairing the accident, he regained his equanimity. Mr. Lempriere was a plain sensible man; he was heartily ashamed of his wife's mistakes, but, as he knew, from experience, how vain was the attempt, he never tried to correct them. Mrs. Lempriere certainly understood grammar worse than any one else ever did, she often confounded one part with another, but she was sure to misplace the singular and plural of the verb to be. I were going to do it,' and 'You was having it,' were her common modes of expression, and, if ever she spoke correctly it was by mere accident. If Mr. Lem-

priere named grammar, she generally replied, 'Grammar, my dear, grammar was not in fashion when I was a gal.' 'Nor when I was a boy, I suppose: but I must hold my tongue.'

Mr. Leclerc was too well bred and too kind-hearted to laugh at involuntary ignorance, but he could not suppress his risibility when Mrs. Lempriere complimented him in the course of the evening, as an iniquitous author, she meant antiquarian: Miss V. did not endeavour to suppress her mirth, and Mrs. Lempriere hastily said,

"What have I said wrong now, Miss Laura? I'm alas a committing blunders, but I do not do much ill if I make you laugh."

"But I have laughed too much, Mrs. L., I have a touch of that horrible pain in my side, and I know it will not bear playing with."

Mr. Leclerc rose.

"You will fatigue yourself too greatly, Miss V., I will bid you good evening, and call in a few days to enquire after your health."

Miss V. said good evening, in a low voice, and Mr. L. slowly retraced his steps to his lodgings. As Jersey is only twelve miles in length, and eleven, in some parts not more than six, miles broad, Mr. Leclerc soon made himself acquainted with it, and, as he neither admired shooting nor fishing, he felt his time hang rather heavy on his hands; he dined once with the governor, and, after the lapse of a month, again called on Miss Vernon; he very much wished to learn, yet did not like to ask, what circumstances had taken her from Wales to the places she named, and finally to Jersey. She was still suffering from indisposition but her voice was firmer, and she did not tremble,

much at every sound as she did when he first saw her, but she was dreadfully nervous, and almost fainted when the dog unexpectedly licked her hand.

"You are quite an invalid," said Mr. L., when the water her attendant gave her restored her self-possession.

"Yes, sir; and worse than that, I am conscious that it is self-caused; my ill health and altered fortune are the results of my own imprudence. I am very far from well now, but, two years since, no one could have supposed I should live one hour after the other."

Laura paused, and her eyes filled with tears; Mr. L. felt embarrassed, he knew little of her, and her self-condemnation seemed to intimate that she had in some way grievously transgressed. He had never been in Wales from the time that he first saw her there, and in thirteen years many changes had taken place, he well remembered her, and her venerable grandfather, and the tale which he had told him of her father's turpitude. She was now young, and perhaps had no friends to direct her, and she spoke of her altered fortune; he might be able to serve her, and he did not need a request.

"I am, of course, Miss Vernon, a stranger to the occurrences of your life: if I was acquainted with them, I might advise you, or if I can in any way assist you, I shall be very happy to do so."

"I thank you, sir; but you have mistaken the import of my words, they refer to the past, for the future I have no fear. I know you are aware of those circumstances, relating to my parents, which, in the eyes of the world, are considered sufficient reason for insulting the children. I cannot now go into a long

detail, but as it is right you should know who you are favouring with your company, when I feel able I will relate my history, if so I may term what I have seen and suffered."

"I shall be gratified by listening, Miss V., but I will take my departure now, you will have gained strength when I call again."

Miss V. pressed him to take some refreshment, but he declined, and, wishing to inspect the adjoining islands, he walked down to the harbour, where he found the ship in which he had sailed from London, and, as the master was waiting for a freight, Mr. Leclerc engaged her for two months. Mr. Leclerc passed that time in visiting the three islands, and as it was then the end of October, he was landed at Cherbourg, intending to pass the winter in Paris. He wrote to his landlady, requesting her to keep the apartments for him, as he should see her again in the spring, and sent a polite note to Miss Vernon, informing her of his intention of returning to the island in the succeeding year.

France had been then several years under the sway of Louis XVIII., but change of dynasty had not smothered the miserable restless wish for tumult and disorder that has for so many years characterized the people. Mr. Leclerc was a man of rank, and the saloons of the Tuileries were no longer attractive, when he reflected what had been the death of the valiant, and some of them the good, descendants of the ancient nobility. All the places of public entertainment in France, and the rest of the Continent, are kept open on the afternoon of the Sunday; the Louvre, and the palace of Versailles, are shown to the people, and the celebrated fountain at St. Cloud, on that day. This is the system which some of our moralists would

introduce amongst us, but, while we hear a great deal of the decorous habits of the French people, and their progress in civilization, no one, I believe, would wish to view it here. The French are more polished than their English neighbours; but let us rather retain our bluntness and vulgarity than have refinement accompanied with barricades, tumults, states of siege, and the other adjuncts of French improvement. So thought Mr. L., when, sufficiently tired of France, and its certainly deceptions people, he left it in April, for Jersey.

CHAPTER XII.

MR. LECLERC called on Miss V. a fortnight after his return, and was gratified at witnessing the amendment of her health. She was disencumbered of her wraps. She received Mr. Leclerc with a smile, and thanked him for his punctuality. Mr. L. soon reminded her that she had promised to relate the events of her life ; and said that, “ if she felt herself equal to the task, he should esteem himself favoured by her confidence.”

Laura laid her hand on her forehead, and, after a short pause, said, “ You are acquainted with the history of my family up to the time when you first saw any of them. Shortly after that period, my dear grandfather declined very much ; he was not capable of discharging his duties, and that circumstance greatly distressed him. For the last three months of his life he was confined to his room ; and, during that time, he most earnestly impressed upon my brother and myself the necessity and duty of ‘ Serving our Creator in the days of our youth.’ Alas ! I grieve to think that we both forgot that injunction. We were both attached to our grandfather, and his death nearly distracted us ; it was a long time before my aunt could

console us ; she tried to do so, though she was herself greatly afflicted. By my grandfather's death, the curacy became vacant ; and many regretted him ; his piety and his kindness had been felt, and so was his loss. The really estimable Christian minister does ever command respect from all whose good opinion is of any importance ; and even the profligate will not dare to impugn his conduct, however they may ridicule it. My grandfather, perhaps, mentioned his rector to you ; he spoke of him as he once was, a fashionable man and fond of high society ; but years and events had changed his character, and the rapid progress of sectarianism in Wales roused his zeal for the Establishment, of which he was a minister. He came down as soon as he was informed of my grandfather's death, and intimated his intention of residing. The rectory was wholly inadequate to the accommodation of his family ; and, except ours, there was no other residence, in or near the parish, at all fit for him. He is one of a high family ; but he always treated my grandfather as an equal ; and he proposed to my aunt to become her tenant, she occupying such part of the house as best suited her. Unfortunately for us, my aunt did not accede to this arrangement : she wished to go to London, in order that Augustus and I might receive such an education as she thought suitable to us : and, as the rector much wished for the house, he paid her £1800, with a contingent stipulation that if, when of age, my brother and I did not approve the sale, we were to return the money, and he was to resign the estate.

Six months after Mr. Morgan's decease, we left ; I was just fifteen when I revisited London ; and, as I had left it very young, it was entirely new to me : my aunt engaged

apartments at Brompton, and we were perfectly contented. Mrs. Vernon's health was never good, and as she could not bear the idea of parting with me, and was undecided where to send my brother, she requested me to write to Mr. Melsom, an old friend of Capt. Vernon's. He came and soon removed my aunt's uneasiness: he would send Augustus to the same school where his sons were; and Miss Melsom should call, she would name such masters as my aunt might think I required. Miss Melsom came and entirely captivated me. I had never before seen a London fashionable lady, and, in addition to her address and manners, Miss Melsom was very beautiful, and possessed an almost syren voice. She was then seventeen, she talked of her masters, wished that she was emancipated from them, blamed her mother for retaining them, and, finally, recommended eight or ten for as many different accomplishments. 'No,' said my aunt, 'Laura is not to learn dancing, it tends to dissipation, and I do not approve of it; neither shall she be tormented with modelling, we do not expect or wish ladies to become artists, though it is an adjunct of drawing, still I do not admire it. If you will take the trouble to request your music master to attend, I shall feel obliged; of foreign languages, she knows as much as will benefit her; but, you may send a German teacher: the writings of the people are so generally unexceptionable that I should wish her to peruse them.' You will believe that I paid little attention to German, I found it very difficult, and I was too thoughtless to take much trouble with anything. Miss Melsom often visited us. She was with us when my aunt was attacked by the illness from which she never recovered; and her deeply regretted

death left me and my brother under the care of Mr. Melsom, whom she requested to act as our guardian. My brother had not spent much of his time with my aunt; but, I was then nearly eighteen, and was sensible of her loss. Whatever might have been her failings in youth, in her latter years she was one of the best and kindest of relations. I did deeply mourn, and it was very long before I again experienced pleasure from anything. About nine months after her decease, Caroline persuaded me to go with her and Mrs. Melsom to a fashionable auction room; where, among other articles, some Italian paintings were to be sold. One was highly praised; Caroline directed my attention to it, and requested my opinion of it. 'All the critics have shown their taste by admiring it, now do, dear Laura, prove yourself to be one, by finding a fault,' was the observation which she addressed to me. I looked at it for a few minutes, and my country education enabled me to detect its fault; it was supposed to be early spring; yet the leaves of the mulberry tree, which figured in the piece, were drawn a dark green, and I remarked this to Miss M. My judgment was undisputed, and I was solicited to inspect other pictures. I did so. I was praised, flattered, and became partial to the hurry and bustle of the scene.

"I generally went with Miss M., but it was not until my rother left his academy, and a profession was spoken of, that I thought of asking Mr. Melsom to what sum we were entitled under the wills of my grandfather and aunt. He briefly answered, £7000 invested in India bonds, bearing interest at £5 per cent., and free of the property tax, and £8567, five per cents., part of that subject to be returned to the

Rector of —, if you disapprove of the agreement entered into by your aunt. Of this sum, your grandfather leaves your brother £2000, and your aunt directs me to sell fifteen India bonds, and appropriate the money to his advantage, in the way I think best. To me and to Augustus this large sum appeared an inexhaustible one; we were nearly unacquainted with the use of money, for, though, in Wales, my ever lamented grandfather made us the dispensers of his bounty, with the laudable motive of implanting charity in our hearts, yet a small sum there purchases necessities in abundance, and Augustus and I concluded our thousands hundreds of thousands. He much wished to enter the army, and this agreed with my aunt's wishes, she had many friends in Madras, and she wished him to procure an appointment there. This, at the time, was difficult, my brother was too impatient to wait, and insisted that Mr. M. should purchase him an ensigncy in a regiment then stationed at Brighton. His wishes were complied with, and my brother, at the age of seventeen, entered into gay society, with no one to guide or direct him. I entered fully into the dissipation of the Melsoms, I took lessons in dancing, from an eminent teacher, and, as I was told that I graced a ball-room, it was frequently my resort." I chose what ornaments I wished, and was never without money or its value. Mr. M. generally gave me what I asked for, or, if he refused, Miss M. bore evidence to the truth of my statement, and tradesmen gave me unlimited credit upon Caroline's assurance that, when I was twenty-one, they would be settled with."

"Stop here," said Mr. Leclerc; "so much speaking may injure you, and the character of the Melsoms is

well known to me. You are not the only heiress who has reason to regret her knowledge of them. Of Mr. Melsom's origin, I know nothing, but I have heard curious details; however, as they are uncorroborated, I will pass them by; but he is not a man of property, and lives by swindling. Among so many thousands of merchants as England contains, we must expect to meet with some whose conduct disgraces their class. Mr. W. Melsom is a large ship-owner, masters of ships are generally men of low origin, but who, by perseverance and ability in their profession, amass money; labouring under the misfortune of a confined education, they are incompetent to fill any but a maritime station, and many of them, not possessing sufficient property to purchase the whole of a ship, will buy an eighth, or a fourth, of a Mr. Melsom, on the condition of being appointed master. In this situation, a man, as minor owner, is entirely in the power of the superior, and Mr. Melsom has defrauded several industrious men, in a scandalous manner. He receives £1600, £1800, or £2000, for part of a ship, he receives the freights, and gives cash occasionally to lull any suspicions which may be excited, and when, at the end of four or five years, the unfortunate part owner insists upon a settlement, he is ordered to give up his register, and seek his redress in a court of Chancery. I could relate some illustrative instances, but I will not interrupt the thread of your narrative; some other time I will detail them if the relation should be agreeable to you. Now I will take my leave, and do myself the pleasure of spending to-morrow evening with you."

Mr. Leclerc was punctual, and Miss V. resumed, as follows:

"I should weary you, were I to detail all the ex-

travagancies into which I plunged ; a few will serve to convince you that I was in a dangerous situation. The furniture and ornaments of the rooms which I occupied were not to my taste, and I had them embellished in the most expensive style ; my own apparel was the richest I could procure ; and, that nothing might be wanting, I had my own horse and footman, although Mr. Melsom kept up a large establishment. My brother and his dissipated companions frequently joined our parties, and I lived in a continual whirl of folly and amusement. The appointment which had been solicited for Augustus was at last conferred, and he left England, for Madras, when I was not quite twenty years of age : after his departure, I became strongly attached to card-playing. This was owing to a remark of Miss Melsom, who said that I had better change some ornaments I wore. ‘ You should dress, Laura, to attract the gentlemen, not to please yourself ; it is time for you to think of a change—after one or two-and-twenty, you will be said to be on the old maids’ list.’ I listened with impatience, ‘ Dress for a husband !’ the idea was humiliating, and I neglected myself, and played at cards to show my contempt of such advice.”

“ Then, like the heroine of one of our novels, you had no wish to be offered for sale.”

“ No, Mr. Leclerc, I ever felt the greatest contempt for that class of fortune-hunters who seek females of property, merely on that account ; and I did not suppose that any gentleman of honourable principles would very highly estimate a female who would marry him because he offered himself, and could support her ; while perhaps her lap-dog was an object of greater interest to her. I was ever very

proud, and I could not, for an instant, take the trouble of acting contrary to my natural sentiments: I could not lower myself so much in my own estimation as to dissemble my feelings, and, if I then acted precipitately, experience has given me no reason to regret my decision. In one respect, I was very wrong, I played cards until I became a gamester, and I have sat from eleven to three speculating, and alternately winning and losing. Next to cards, dancing was my favourite pursuit, and—I must not extenuate—my Sunday evenings were generally so spent. Some early recollections would obtrude themselves, and the calculation of the card-table could not effectually banish them, but, in the crowd and glare of the ball-room, reflection was hushed, and I entered without scruple into the amusements of the evening. Of course, when retiring I was too wearied to recollect that I ought to solicit the protection of my Creator, and, while the morning saw me languidly seeking a few hours' repose, the afternoon witnessed my rising unmarked by any act of devotion. Yet all this time I fancied myself an exemplary Christian. I would cut up cambric handkerchiefs for caps, and give them away; I subscribed to various charities, and went to church so regularly that the Venerable Archdeacon who officiated was congratulated on the piety of his hearer—I bought tracts, and gave them away, saying that I was the descendant of a clergyman, and knew that they were in general properly written—I attended missionary meetings, but this was not enough: I went further: I was a regular communicant."

Mr. Leclerc started.

"What was I?" said Laura in a tone of bitterness.

"Pray go on."

"No: what, sir, is your opinion then of my conduct?"

"It does not become me, Miss Vernon, to judge any one; my own failings require ample condemnation and correction."

"Your charity, sir, will not allow you to speak of my errors in the terms they merit; but I was not intentionally a hypocrite, I did not give myself time to think, pleasure fascinated me, and I eagerly availed myself of its glittering, but unsubstantial, enjoyments. Actuated by the whim of the moment, I advertised for a companion, shortly after I first commenced my extravagant mode of living; and the person whom I engaged was a Miss Rolfe. The marriage of her brother, a dissenting preacher, had obliged her to seek for a situation, and mine was the first that offered. She remained with me but for a short time, she could not countenance my absurdities, and her advice so much offended me that I requested her to seek another abode. After she left, I saw nothing of her until, one morning, my maid brought me a letter; it was very respectfully worded, and the substance of it was that her brother had injured his health, by over exertion in his professional duties, and was then receiving medical advice; his wife was likewise dangerously ill, and could not survive, unless removed to a milder climate. They had not money to meet the extra and unavoidable expenses, and if I would lend them £10, it would be repaid in six months, and, by lending it, I should confer the greatest possible, favour which would be ever felt, and gratefully acknowledged. I had not the sum then by me, £6 was all I possessed, and that I might have given her, but I had promised to make one of a brilliant party at the house of

Mrs. Milsom's father, and had ordered a crape handkerchief for the occasion. This was to be £5, and, if I gave Miss Rolfe the money I had, I could not pay for that; I re-read the letter, and carelessly told my servant that I would enquire, and, if I was satisfied, I would call."

"And you did," said Mr. Leclerc, hastily.

"I did not: was it astonishing that I should forget affliction and distress, when receiving the adulation of flattery, and mingling with the gay?"

"Go on," said Mr. Leclerc.

"An incident, trivial in itself, first awoke me from the lethargy into which pleasure had lulled me. Mr. Milsom had invited a large party; several of the younger sons of the nobility, in town, were among the expected guests, and every preparation was made to receive them with splendour. After tossing over all my jewellery, I found none to please me, and I was about to send for some, when I remembered a suite of pearls and diamonds, which the Marquess Aulairville had brought from France, and which he gave to my mother, when she became as she thought, his wife. After throwing every article from my drawers and wardrobe, I could not find one of the armlets, and, as a last hope, I examined a desk, of which I had taken great care, because it was my grandmother's. I opened a parcel, and a brooch, which I had once worn with delight, fell out. My mother's hair was enclosed in it, and on the gold back were traced the words, "Seek ye after God," and while your body moulders in the dust, "your soul shall live." This small memorial of better and happier days awakened dormant reflections, and I felt half inclined to give way to them, and refuse joining the party in the saloon. I certainly should

have remained in my own room, had not Caroline rallied me on my melancholy, and compelled me to accompany her, under the threat of telling Sir George Peters that I was in love with him. There was no ground for this assertion, but I knew Miss Milsom, after six years' acquaintance, and I did not wish her to make me appear ridiculous. I was not in my usual spirits, I sat down to play whist, but I could not banish the suggestion that the card-table was not the most fit place to seek God. 'You are not paying attention. Laura,' said Mr. Melsom, who was my partner. 'No, sir; I was just thinking that as cards were invented for the amusement of an idiot,* we do not show ourselves very wise in making them a study.' 'Bless me, said an old lady, in an under tone, 'has Miss Vernon lost to-night?' This observation roused my resentment, and I proposed to substitute speculation—our opponents consented; I played some time, and, counting my fish, found I was the winner of £180. I rose, and, saying I intended to dance, quitted the table, with the resolution, which I have kept, never again to play for money. Time, which renders us wiser, reveals many things: I thought I perceived a growing coolness from the Melsoms towards me, and I retaliated by confining myself to my own apartments. I had attained twenty, but I did not wish to be teased with tradesmen's bills, and I requested Mr. Milsom to settle them. He did so, and, as I began to acquire a taste for reading, I did not enter so much into company as usual.

* Charles VI. of France. I am not certain that I have not borrowed the observation, if I have, it is not intentionally, but having read a great deal, I cannot always say whether my ideas are original or acquired.

My broach still tormented me, and I skipped over the *Spectator* and *Rambler*, because they were instructive reading, that was a laudable pursuit. Still, to use a sea phrase, I steered clear of devotional books, I very readily adopted the opinion that they rendered people melancholy, and were therefore unfit for the perusal of any but religious persons, whose professions required them to be grave."

"I seldom heard from my brother—gentlemen have better employment than corresponding with their female relatives; but Augustus at last wrote to me, to please himself. He said that he wanted money, and should be gratified if I would send him £2000; and, when he was of age, he would give it me back. As to the house in Wales, he left me to act as I chose with respect to that, and, if I wished the rector to retain it, he was perfectly agreeable. I had felt hurt by my brother's neglect, and I determined to send him the money, to prove that I was unlike him. When Mr. Melsom returned from the city, I went down to him, and told him I had immediate occasion for £2000. He repeated the sum, and, raising his eye-brows, said:—"You have acted improperly—I have intended to speak to you on pecuniary matters long ago. In forbearing to intrude among people of rank and wealth, you have shown some sense. Had you been any way careful, you need not have lavished your money as you have: there are now but £1200 left, belonging to you." I was overcome, and sat like a statue; but I soon recovered, and asked him how it could be possible that I had spent £10,867 in three years and a half? Mr. Melsom answered by producing a number of bills, among which were his own, in which he charged me £400.

per annum for my board, and the use of the apartments which I occupied. I am no arithmetician, but I knew enough to see that the bills were rightly calculated, though the charges were exorbitant. My horse was charged £600, and that Mr. Milsom purchased for me. I could not but tell him that, if I did not know better, he did, and that, as my guardian, he ought to have corrected my folly. To this he returned no answer, and I left him greatly enraged.

“In the evening I received a note from him, in which he said that £200 were due to him for the half year which had expired since I attained majority; and that the bills he sent must be settled, or I should be sued upon them; and finally, that as, in consequence of the ruin of my fortune, I could no longer remain in his family, he begged me to make my arrangements for quitting it as soon as might be convenient. I ran to Caroline’s dressing-room with this letter in my hand, and, throwing it down, asked her how I should answer it? “By complying with its request. It is folly for you, Miss Vernon, to think, for the future, of associating with us; and I suppose you would not like to be a humble friend.” My face flushed with passion—Caroline at the time wore a necklace which I had given her, and several elegant ornaments which decorated the room had been purchased by me. I smiled contemptuously, and returned to my room. Never was I so strongly tempted to do wrong. Miss Melsom had told Sir George Peters that I was attached to him; but her communication had produced quite a contrary effect to that which she anticipated. He said he should ever thank her most fervently for informing him of his good fortune, and that he should take the first opportunity of availing himself of it. He

directly wrote me this letter, which I received but that morning."

Miss V. handed Mr. Leclerc two letters, and he read them both.

"My dear Miss Vernon,

"I know that I must often appear ridiculous, but I beseech you, on this occasion, to judge me mercifully. Your friend has most kindly informed me that I have found more favour with you than any other of your numerous admirers. I had not the vanity to aspire to your hand; but this intimation has given me hope: and, with every sentiment of the most sincere attachment, I offer you my hand and fortune. What that is I need not say; but, if you will condescend to receive my addresses, giving me the hope that you will one day share it, you will confer the greatest happiness on,

"My dear Miss Vernon,

"Your ever most truly attached,

"and faithful servant,

"GEORGE PETERS."

"Sir,

"I have perused your letter with the greatest astonishment—I am convinced that no part of my conduct ever appeared calculated to induce you to write such an one. If Miss Melsom has not been actuated by some malignant motive, she certainly has been by that fatal spirit of jest which so often produces incalculable mischief. She has grossly and shamefully misled you, and has acted a most unfriendly part by me. Had she so spoken of me to a gentleman of less honour than yourself, my peace and reputation might have been for ever destroyed. Allow me to say, Sir George, that I shall always be proud to rank you among the number of my friends: but the respect I feel for you, and my gratitude to you for your noble conduct, will not suffer me to deceive you. It has ever been my opinion that no female ought to receive the attentions of any gentleman, unless she entertains for him a distinguishing preference—that preference I do not feel for you; and,

in unequivocally declining your offered honour, I beg you will favour me by believing that I express my real sentiments, and can only wish that, with a lady more deserving than myself, you may find that happiness which you have honoured me by supposing I could confer.

"I am, sir,

"Respectfully and obediently,

"Your favoured servant,

"LAURA VERNON."

"Poor Sir George!" said Mr Leclerc, returning the letter; "such an answer was enough to rouse his anger!"

"Which I believe it did, but not towards me, as you will hear. I knew that, if Caroline was not attached to the baronet, she would not refuse him; and I read his letter in a curious frame of mind. I should mortify her, and gratify my revenge, by accepting his addresses: but these reflections soon fled, and my better feelings became predominant. I was not partial to Sir George Peters: and I felt that it would be most unworthy meanness in me to take advantage of his open-hearted frankness, to suit my own convenience, and to gratify my private malice. I therefore wrote the letter which you have read, and then looked over the bills which Mr. Melsom had sent me. They amounted to £700; and, shuddering at the situation in which I was then, I threw myself on the floor, and at last cried myself to sleep. My servant knocked repeatedly; but, as I refused to admit her, she was compelled to retire. The next morning I was unable to think at all; and, to relieve my mind, I ordered my maid to attend me. I strolled along, my thoughts confusedly agitating my brain, when, in a retired part of a field, a gipsy accosted me.

'Oh, marm,' exclaimed my servant, 'do let me have my fortune told.' I nodded, and, after she had muttered over some nonsense, the woman turned to me, and begged I would make a trial of her skill. As, with these creatures, all is guess, they sometimes guess right; but, unfortunately for her skill, the gipsy made one grand mistake. I was uneasy about my mother, and not without reason; for she was very ill. I should soon be married and should be the mother of nine children, and I should be happy; but, a near relation would die a violent death: whether it was male or female the fates said not. This last expression excited my risibility, and the first gave me no very high opinion of the sybil's divination. I gave her a half-crown, and returned to Mr. M.'s, to consider how I should act. It was now that I found the benefit of those instructions which my dear grandfather had so unremittingly given me; and I was enabled to form plans and execute them with a resolution that has often surprised me. I sought for, and obtained, respectable apartments, and sent my trunks there. I wrote to Mr. Melsom, saying, that I should leave the furniture which I had purchased, and, as it was valuable, it was quite sufficient to pay him the £200 he claimed, the other bills I would settle when convenient. To this he returned a very polite answer, said he should always be happy to see me, and a great deal more verbiage. I tore the letter to atoms; and, from that time until now, I have never seen any of the Melsom family. I wrote to my brother and related the truth, begging him to avoid my errors, and to try to make his pay suffice.

sent £100, and, as I minutely explained my situation, I knew he could not receive any more from me. I

fancied myself a great economist; but, so bad an one was I that I spent £100 in seven weeks. I detained my maid until she procured a situation; and, proud as I was, I could not disguise from myself the fact that I must seek for one for myself. But, what was I fit for, my education and situation in life placed me above a menial station, even if my form had been by nature fitted for it; and the little attention which I had paid to any branch of knowledge prevented my having sufficient acquaintance with it to enable me to teach it. After meditating for some time, I resolved to seek for some respectable school where I could be received an inmate and attain the instruction of the masters who attended. I was soon suited; but, I was surprised at the low charge—£100 per annum. I thought they must loose; but, I soon began to see things through a different medium. I paid unremitting attention to my teachers, and it was at this time that I first read any of your works. I soon became captivated by them, and never laid one down until I had read it through; and, you must permit me to offer you my thanks for the improvement I made."

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Leclerc, gravely; "but I do not know how it is attributable to me."

"The Almighty gave you genius by which you acquired talent, it then depended upon yourself to apply it to beneficial uses, or the contrary. It has been remarked that abstinence from evil is only negative virtue; if so, possessing abilities, but allowing them to sleep, must be positive evil; since no one can tell what influence might not have been produced over the mind and heart by a judicious literary production, moral paintings, or any of those works which

strike the eye and charm the understanding. You might have neglected your talents; and, contented with competency, have slumbered through life in inglorious ease. Where then, would have been the many whose dispositions have been amended and passions corrected by the perusal of your writings? They would have remained in a state of wickedness and folly, and you have been most culpable before your Creator. But, you chose the better way; you cultivated the talents with which He had entrusted you; you shed the light of science on the world; and threw around the moral doctrines of the Gospel a persuasive eloquence which fascinated the senses; while the mind was compelled to acknowledge and to feel the truth of your reasoning. At the time that I read your works, I did not think that I should ever have the pleasure of conversing with you, their author; but, now that I have, I must bear evidence to the good you have effected. You wrote, I read, I was convinced and I was instructed."

"I am most happy to hear it. Whenever I feel my spirits flag, or am tempted to indulge dissatisfaction, I will remember what you have now said, and prosecute my studies and employments with redoubled energy. I have often thought of the promissory injunction, 'Cast thy bread on the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it again.' When I published those books, fifteen years ago, I little expected that such an one as yourself would bear testimony to their usefulness."

"Not I alone; but, many with whom they have become the subjects of discussion. My chief pleasure was reading them, but too often, prone to extremes, I severely injured my health by the intensity with

which I studied. I rarely retired before twelve and rose again at five, until my spirits became too effete to endure it, and I was compelled to discontinue my reading. The tradesmen so teased me for their bills that I paid them in full; and then all that remained of my once considerable fortune was £300. My trinkets had cost me about £4000, as, for these I had no further use, I sold them for £1300, and thought myself fortunate in obtaining that for them. I then knew a little more of buying and selling than I did when I purchased them. I did not hear from my brother; and I wrote to him directly I was engaged as governess by a highly respectable family. I knew that the interest of £1600 would not support me, and I thought it better to procure a situation, while I had some property of my own, than to wait until I had none, when, if I was ever so uncomfortable, I should be obliged to submit. It was not with very pleasant reflections that I undertook the irksome task of instructing in a family where my pupils were spoilt and proud, and their parents contradictory and ridiculous. The first time I heard from Augustus was when he returned to claim his £2000, which, by the will of our grandfather, he could not have until he was twenty-one. He directly confirmed the sale of the Welsh estate to the rector, and, as I had not the money to re-purchase it, even if I had wished, I acquiesced; and, for some time, my brother called regularly every week to enquire after my health; then a fortnight elapsed, at length there was a total cessation of his visits; and I was left, for several months, to conjecture the cause. During the interval, Sir G. Peters, who had ascertained where I was, renewed his offers, and, when I peremptorily interdicted the subject, he left me, to torture

Miss Melsom. You, sir, most likely may know whose wife she is."

"Poor girl, I do."

"Yes, with all her faults Caroline deserved a better fate. Sir George was the projector of that fatal marriage, and she has to thank her own cruel and unfriendly conduct for her present misery. The neglected wife of a man but too justly condemned, the unhappy Caroline lingers miserably through life."

If blue eyes want expression, they certainly possess sweetness. Miss V.'s did in an eminent degree, and she blushed as she wiped away the tears that obscured their meaning.

"Sir George," she continued, "exulted in the success of his scheme, and says that her punishment would operate as a caution; she had caused him considerable unhappiness, and deserved to suffer some: but I could not refrain from telling him that he had greatly injured himself by causing the misery of another. He replied that she should not have played with his peace, and left me, enraged that I would not rejoice at her affliction. He came one evening, and asked me when I had seen Lieut. Vernon? I said not for three months. Had I given him money? I had. Was I aware of the use which he had made of it? 'To what do you allude, Sir George?' 'Why, Madam, an affair of gallantry has detained him from you.' 'An affair of gallantry!' Gracious Heaven! by what perversion of human intellect, is it that men speak in terms so light of crimes that involve families in irredeemable distress, and draw down the vengeance of offended Heaven upon a guilty nation! Pardon me if I seem to speak in harsh terms—I have but too much reason. Capt. Harvey was the victim of an

imprudent marriage : in his fortieth year he became acquainted with a young female dazzlingly beautiful, and but too much accomplished, she was scarcely eighteen when he married her, and he—but too early discovered his indiscretion. It was not to be imagined that, where so great a disparity of years existed, there would be many feelings in unison, and, as a husband, Capt. Harvey was wretched. If he secluded her from society, she mocked his care, and openly derided his authority ; and when at Portsmouth, where she met my brother, her conduct towards Colonel Phillips was so glaring that no man but himself could have overlooked it. Indeed so reckless was she that a Miss Manvers, the mistress of Lieut. Ellison, refused to admit her to her society.”

Mr. Leclerc sighed when Miss V. referred to Gertrude, but she did not notice his emotion.

“ My unfortunate brother became entangled by this bad woman ; she had abandoned her husband and children, and been residing with him at Dulwich for five months. Capt. Harvey had met and challenged him, they fought, and the Captain was mortally wounded. All this Sir George told me, the gipsy’s prophecy rushed into my mind, I thought I saw my brother tried for murder, and the scaffold and its horrid apparatus was present to my view. I wildly implored Sir George to save him, and the Baronet was much affected when he said it was impossible. Be calm, your brother is so dangerously wounded that, though he may linger for weeks, he can never recover. Why should you wish that he should ? although juries in these cases are generally indulgent, no jury could acquit him, coming before them as the murderer of the husband of the woman whom he has led into error. Mr.

Leclerc, my rash brother was the victim of that base woman : but I will not dwell on this wretched part of my life. Augustus was conveyed to St. George's hospital, and there I saw him. The Coroner's jury had returned a verdict of wilful murder, and I leave you to judge what were my feelings, when the death of my brother, in a charitable receptacle, appeared desirable. I resigned my employment that I might be able to attend to him, but for some time he rejected all my attentions. One of the surgeons knew me, and I obtained an order which admitted me daily ; his mind was in a fearful state, and the impatience he manifested was appalling. What did we wish him to live for ? even if he escaped conviction, he must expect to linger out his life in a prison, his creditors would never cease to persecute him. I smothered my own grief, and at times he permitted me to read and talk to him. I wished to have him removed to my lodgings, but he was detained by the Coroner's warrant, and it could not be. I heard this with agony ; my own health was so much impaired that I could not walk from chair to chair without assistance. My anxiety at last proved too much for my strength, and, for a fortnight, I was unconscious of everything. Several times a glass was applied to my lips, and it was only the slight moisture on the surface that proved I existed. My first enquiry was for my brother. I was told he was living : the next day I insisted upon being allowed to see him. My landlady talked of the distance, and of my precarious state, but, when she found me positive, she said that a gentleman, who had constantly accompanied the physician, had strictly charged her not to allow me to move. I was remonstrating, when two gentlemen came, one was the physician,

the other I recognized as a foreign gentleman, whom I had seen at the hospital. The valet of a gentleman attached to the French Embassy had met with a severe accident, and this nobleman called at times to enquire after him. As he conversed in French, I had supposed that he did not understand English, and had still talked to my brother while he was present. Why he should come to me, I could not imagine, but I soon knew, when he placed a miniature of my mother in my hand. I pointed to a chair, its support seemed an absolute relief, and his words were nearly inarticulate: what a feeling must it be when the parent blushes before his children! The Marquess was not able to converse, and abruptly saying, 'I will write,' he quitted the house. His letter was long and affectionate, he entreated me to depend upon his care, and repeatedly declared that his children should be protected. I read the letter without emotion, I was past that, and, when he came, I merely requested that he would convey me to my brother. He did, and, through his influence, I was accommodated with a room at the hospital, and saw my brother constantly, as before. I believe he died happy. I was talking earnestly to him, when he said, 'I sometimes think, Laura, that God will pardon me for your sake.' 'Oh, my brother, not for my sake, for the sake of your Redeemer.' 'I dare not seek Him, Laura, I who, in the heathen temples of India, have profaned His name, and every where trampled on His laws, but read, my sister.' I did so, and he sank, as I thought, to sleep, but it was the sleep of death."

"Stay, Miss V., I cannot allow you to agitate yourself by relating these distressing occurrences. It is mere selfishness to listen to you."

“Mr. Leclerc, they are ever present to my mind ; time has, indeed, blunted my grief, but no years can banish the remembrance of my sorrow. Before the first year after my brother's death elapsed, I was continually remarking, ‘Ah, this time last year my Augustus was living,’ but when the succeeding year came, it was still the same. I substituted the plural number, and was just as wretched. I was very ill, but perfectly collected, as my corporeal powers decayed, my mental ones appeared to be invigorated, and I argued with an energy that has since surprized myself. The Marquess entreated me to go to France, he even knelt, but I refused to comply. He told me that consumption had strongly attacked me, that mild air and tender treatment were the only things that could benefit me, and he implored me to consent. Why should I, in what character could you introduce me ? the truth you could not declare, and, from your mode of living, surmises, the most injurious to me, might be formed. In what light should I be viewed by the Marquise, and your children, your acknowledged children ? The Marquess's lips were the colour of my hand, he would, he said, treat me as his ward. That story will not gain credence, a female of twenty-three is not supposed to require a guardian, neither could I act a double part. The fury of the democrats had spared the Chateau Aulaireville, and it was there the Marquess wished to conduct me. ‘With what feelings should I see the ancient mansion, whose heir my murdered mother fondly thought her son, that son who, deprived of parental care, to guard and guide his foot-steps, was hurried before his Maker, with all his sins upon his head.’ ‘Then, Laura, let me be guiltless with regard to you, let me protect and defend you.’ ‘No ; you

cannot do so. Without rendering me an object of insulting pity, you cannot protect me in your proper character, and protection from you in any other would be fatal to mine. I never will go to France; my time on earth may be short, and I will not embitter it by complying with your request. I could not mix with your family without remembering that I too was your child, nor could I forget that I ought to respect the feelings of your wife, and spare her the detail of your—'

" 'Laura, you speak to your father.' 'I do. To that father who, cast upon the hospitality of a British subject, repaid him for his disinterested kindness by deluding his daughter, and becoming the parent of children whom he deserted, at the time that they most needed a protector. From the years of my grandfather, you must have supposed that his life could not be long; and more, humble as his station was, still he was a public man, and you must have learned the fact of his death. Oh, my lord, had you informed my grandfather of your real situation, how different now would have been your feelings! the happiness and reputation of a family would not have been destroyed, nor would you have received reproaches from the lips of your child. My brother would not have existed, to trample on all laws, nor should I have deeply violated the commands of my Creator.' 'Laura, you talk like an inexperienced girl; you have never yet known the power of affection.' 'Of affection? if your lordship means the power of self-love, I can understand you; that would teach you to wish your own happiness; the passion which we call love consists in seeking that of its object.' 'Girl, girl, you will drive me mad.' 'I do not wish to do so, but I do wish to touch your heart, to teach you to feel. From the

account which I have heard of my mother, and from what I remember of her, I do not suppose that she was likely to take Lord Lyttleton for an authority, or to agree with his lordship when he says 'Not loving first, but living wrong, is shame,' and the time you expended in gaining her affection would have been much better employed in subduing your own. But you did not think so; you chose to commit perjury, by going through a mock ceremony, and, when it suited your convenience, you disavowed the obligations into which you had entered, and that without remorse. How was my mother situated? a wife without a husband, a mother, whose children could not claim a father. True, you were amenable to the laws of her country, but what of that? the interested and unblushing seek redress in courts of justice, the refined and sensitive shrink from observation. And you were the husband of her early love, how had you deserved it! With a perfect consciousness of existing ties, you hesitated not to ruin the peace of a whole family, and, what was more, you injured the reputation of its head. Spotless as the snow of heaven should be the character of the public teacher, and he whose penetration could not preserve his own daughter might not unreasonably be supposed an improper and imperfect guide for others: And it was so; by the unfeeling and criticisingly prudent, my dear grandfather was treated with disrespect. After causing all this evil and misery, your lordship apparently ceased to think of your English relatives; certainly in the saloons of the Tuilleries and the galleries of the Louvre, the gay Marquess Aulairville was not to be expected to recollect people who were really so absurd as to be unhappy. To whom could my grandfather, when dying, confide us, but to

his sister; her errors were corrected, and, if even they had not been, it was reasonable to expect that she would be more interested for us than a stranger. But she was aged, and it pleased the Almighty to call her from us, and we were then left to our own guidance; had you thought of your children, that was the time to have proffered your assistance, and, by not doing it, you are responsible for our faults. Had you advised us, my extravagance might have been corrected, and the many weary hours of mental agony and corporeal suffering which I have known, and which I now feel, might have been spared me.

“Of my brother I can scarcely trust myself to speak: he felt, like me, a painful uneasiness, an idea of isolation, and whatever seemed to fill up the vacuum he eagerly caught at. I have no doubt that this led to his unhappy entanglement with Mrs. Harvey: alas, poor boy, he had to learn that immorality and happiness are not synonymous. Sympathy for a servant, not any wish of being serviceable to us, led you, my lord, to St. George's hospital; I presume our deep affliction excited some compunctuous emotions, and you have acted, and profess to wish to act, affectionately towards me. But, my lord, the past can never be forgotten, though I trust I am not so lost as to withhold forgiveness even from you. But I cannot go to France; situated as I am, I do not think that I am to be required to sacrifice my own wishes. I know that the very sight of the seat of your ancestors would be death to me. My lord, from me you are not entitled to exact obedience, those to whom no duty is owed owe none; your lordship forsook me, I have no right to bow to your authority. Under a kind of threat, you wish to compel me to leave England; this certainly affects me less than your pro-

nises, for my disposition is naturally affectionate, and there is little of novelty in the remark that those who are susceptible of deep attachment are generally impervious to coercion. The heart cannot bend to it : it is my firm opinion that I never can recover, and I cannot die at enmity with you, my lord : let what I have said be remembered, what I now say is the last which I shall intrude upon you. You have children, my lord, the admonitory suggestion of an affectionate parent may have due weight with them. You say I have stuck daggers in your heart ; oh, spare yourself a repetition of these scenes, teach your legitimate children to worship their Creator, and then they will not fail in their duty towards you. You have had education, you have had example ; yes ! but it ceased at the time at which it was most required : a lively girl of fifteen is apt to think that there is something very durable, as well as very charming, in a fine figure, and a pretty face, she does not think that beauty is what the Scotch poet calls it,

‘ Pretty plaything, dear deceit.’

“ The attempt would be vain, were I to describe the Marquess’ rage. ‘ Talk of educating women,’ he exclaimed ; ‘ what education do they want ? their own perverse passions are sufficient teachers for them. I demand a definite answer, Will you go to France ?’ ‘ No, my lord, I cannot.’ The Marquess sternly regarded me, and quitted the house in a violent passion. Now, when time has flung his grey mantle over the past, and the excitement of the moment has passed away, I feel inclined to regret that I mingled so much asperity with my observations ; I might have excited the Marquess’ resentment, without producing amendment. When he left, I requested the person who waited on

me to place before me our ancient Bible ; it is a curiosity ; it was printed in the reign of Elizabeth, and in one part are some papers written by one of my grandfather's great-grand-aunts, giving an account of the zeal with which one of her ancestors withstood the tormenting persecution of one of Mary's agents. This book was always highly valued, it was a complete heir-loom, and it was only on grand occasions that it was suffered to be read. Guided by some sentiment of ancestral pride, I had always preserved it, and, as I did not know where my Pocket Bible was, I read that. Turning over the leaves of the historical preface, I found a £10 note ; I could not imagine how it came there, and, after puzzling myself for long, I remained in the same state of uncertainty as before. I put the note in my pocket-book, and, as it was nearly the time at which my Doctor called, I told my servant to take the book away. It is not, perhaps, to be expected that persons who give their services for money will be wonderfully attentive to their masters, but common humanity is generally looked for : I am sorry to say that I did not meet with it : the neglect of the woman was unbearable. One morning I earnestly begged her to rise and give me some tea : her answer was, ' Oh, Miss, it is only five o'clock, it is too early yet.' I had not strength to insist, and it was actually nine before she prepared my breakfast, then I did not care for it ; and many similar instances of neglect irritated my temper, and increased my illness.

"The Marquess recovered his calmness, and finding that I would not go to France, requested me to fix upon some more proper place of abode than the apartments I then occupied. He has an estate at Beyens in Normandy, and to convince him that I did not wish to thwart him

merely for the sake of obstinacy, I told him that I knew a young female whom I wished to re-engage as a companion and attendant, and that, as she had a relation a clergyman, in Jersey, I would, if agreeable to him, become a resident with them ; I should then be but a short distance from him, and to the eligibility of my home he could make no objection. ' Well, Laura, I consent, but your extreme ill health calls for strong remedial measures ; it is the opinion of your medical attendant that a voyage across the Atlantic would be the only really beneficial course which he can recommend. I entreated the Marquess not to wish such a thing ; the idea of leaving my own country, perhaps to die in a foreign one, was at that time too painful, and, finding me decidedly averse to it, he ceased to press the subject. ' The ship in which you sailed was the only one that offered ; the Marquess wholly engaged her, and, with my former companion, Miss Rolfe, I left England, four years since. I was then so ill that my Doctors insisted I was to take all kinds of disagreeable things, such as the milk of asses, boiled snails, and many others. They treated my refusal as affectation, but the violent convulsions into which the sight of them threw me convinced them that it was not caprice which influenced me. I was then ordered to drink milk mixed with barley water, and brandy, and I had so much of it that I was satiated of all."

Miss V. placed a miniature on the table. " That was my resemblance at that time." Mr. Leclerc shuddered—it seemed the portrait of a corpse.

" The marquis had that drawn—he had read of an Italian prince who, oppressed by the consciousness of crime, wished to perform some penance ; and applied to the reigning Pope to inflict one, but on the con-

dition that it was not to be a painful one. His Holiness reflected for some time, and then gave him a ring, on which was engraved the Latin of the sentence, 'Remember that thou must die.' This ring he was to wear constantly on the fore-finger of his right hand, and the continual admonition had the effect intended. He abandoned his vices, that, as he must die, he might be prepared for it. The marquis said that, when he looked on that picture, he should recollect what I had said, and cease to do wrong. I begged a copy of it, giving as my reason that as I, by my own extravagance, had caused my own misfortunes, that picture would be a warning, if I should recover, and should be tempted to relapse into folly. The marquis acquiesced: gave it to me, and returned to France. My amendment was slow; and, a voyage being still considered necessary, I went with Mrs. Lempriere and Miss Rolfe to Malaga. As the vessel was in ballast, they took one of the Alderney cows, intending to sell her at Malaga. To this, when we were about returning, I refused to consent; and the captain asked me how he was to take a cow, with a cargo of figs and raisins? 'Oh,' said I, 'if you can take her no other way, build a small boat, put her into it, and fasten it to the stern.' This excited the laughter of all present; and an English merchant, at whose house we were staying, declared that I reminded him of Gulliver, when in his room, which he told the sailors to lift out of the water with their hands."

Mr. Leclerc smiled. "The idea was something like it."

"It was; but the cow got home another way. The master of a ship, who arrived too late to get a

cargo, was glad enough to be paid for something ; and he took the animal to Jersey. Our vessel was coming to London ; and I came too, as I wished to see the marquis, who was then there : and I returned to England a Protestant, notwithstanding the efforts of my Malaga friends to convert me. As I still found exertion very irksome and injurious, I determined to keep myself perfectly quiet ; and this, I fear, made me appear to act rudely towards you ; but, after this explanation, you will, perhaps, overlook the appearance of neglect. I did not recollect you, although I was well acquainted with your writings ; and, had I not known you before, I should not have felt you a stranger, when you informed me who you were. But I should not have wearied you with this long detail, had not you seemed solicitous to learn all connected with my grandfather."

"Undoubtedly I was ; I certainly spent but a few hours with him, but he confided to me the history of his family ; and, you see, I so much recollected it that, altered as you were, I knew you, after a lapse of thirteen years. As you must now be sufficiently fatigued, I will bid you good night, and call on you in a day or two."

CHAPTER XIII.

As Mr. and Mrs. Lempriere were ignorant of Miss V.'s affinity to the marquis, they had not been present when she entered into the particulars of her life ; but when she had concluded, and Mr. Leclerc called the succeeding afternoon, she requested Mrs. L. to resume her place at the tea-table ; and Mr. Lempriere and Mr. Leclerc discussed politics together. For a ' Parliament man ' as Mrs. Lempriere styled him, Mr. L. was amazingly ignorant. Laura smiled ; she understood something of business, and, in as good Spanish as she knew, she said to Mr. Leclerc, " You must not disclose official secrets."

" Certainly not ; particularly when in the presence of ladies."

" Oh, Mrs. Lempriere," said Laura, resuming her French dialect, " Mr. Leclerc is dumb before two such tatlars as you and I."

" That's it, is it ? but, sir, you might tell us whether any bill will pass to benefit the Papists ; and, if it does, whether they will cut out throats ?"

" I apprehend there is no danger of that," said Mr. Leclerc, with the most ludicrous gravity. " They are much liberalized of late."

"Now, if I were an M.P., I would vote for them."

"Indeed, Miss Laura! This is the consequence of of travelling, sir; she returned from Spain half a Catholic."

"No, Mr. Lempriere; I have not a grain of Catholicism in my composition; so far from that, that I told a gentleman to turn Mahometan — 'Because,' said I, 'if you want two wives, you will then, at least, be consistent.'"

"There, hear her!" said Mrs. Lempriere. "Oh, sir, she is an odd young lady; she wrote a French sermon once, and wanted Mr. L. to preach it."

"Is that true?" enquired Mr. Leclerc.

Laura blushed. "No. Mr. Lempriere wanted me to give an English sermon of my grandfather's a French dress, and I did. When I was at home, our Rector, whenever he was coming down, used to send a bundle of sermons, for my grandfather to render into Welsh. He knew something of the language, but not sufficient to enable him to write in it."

"Does he not now?"

"Yes; my grandfather taught him. I remember their having a learned discussion whether the Welsh tongue was analogous to the Hebrew."

"I think it is," said Mr. Leclerc. "You speak it fluently."

"I was obliged; for the people around us knew scarcely a word of English, and my grandfather had to take great pains with me, to prevent my retaining the accent."

"You were not a very dull scholar," said Mr. Lempriere.

"I was a very inattentive one, sir, and that was nearly as bad."

"You was not an inattentive scholar," said Mrs. Lempriere; "you was always a studying at Malaga. I don't see what's the use of so much learning."

"No, my dear, you never did," said Mr. Lempriere sighing.

"Pray hold your tongue, it would not have done for your wife to be a fine lady: if I was down to my books, or my music, who was to look after the baking and household affairs, and who was to make your clothes and my own? there is Miss Vernon, she cannot make herself a gown."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I can."

"True enough, you made one two months ago, you said it was the first, and you was six weeks about it."

Laura smiled. "You know I am only a learner."

"Ah, very true! you are my scholar in useful learning."

"And I have an excellent mistress. Mr. Leclerc, have you ever read Mr. Montgomery's 'Grave'?"

"No: if you have it, I should be obliged to you for the loan of it."

Laura sent a child, who was playing in the garden, for the poem; she had only mentioned it to change the conversation; and Mr. Lempriere commencing an argument upon a theological question, Miss V. was silent. Their argument concluded, Mr. Leclerc left, and a few days after Mr. and Mrs. L. and Miss Vernon received cards of invitation to an evening party. Some of the officers from the castle with their ladies were present, and among them Miss Vernon met some old acquaintances. Sir George Peters, then a lieutenant, immediately claimed her as a friend.

"I did not expect to see you here, Sir George," observed Laura.

"I dare say not; but here I am, and unmarried."

Miss V. looked grave. "I think, Sir George, that you will find no lady here at all likely to accept you—I do not know of any."

"Upon my life, I have a great mind to become a knight of Malta, turn monk, or give up my profession, commence clergyman, and get a fellowship."

"So do. Any of these three may be effected, but you may not gain a wife."

"To be serious, Miss Vernon, may I call on you?"

"For what, Sir George, should you—why make me and yourself uncomfortable?"

"But you would always be proud to rank me among the number of your friends."

"Certainly: and, as a friend, I shall be always happy to see you."

"Then I will do myself the honour of calling on you to-morrow."

Mr. Leclerc heard this short dialogue, he was pleased with Laura, and spoke to Sir George, while the lady of one of the officers named a Mrs. Colonel Phillips, and eulogised her beauty and accomplishments. Miss Vernon's colour changed, Sir George struck the table violently, and hastily said, "Madam, do you know of whom you are talking?"

"Mrs. Phillips."

"But who is Mrs. Phillips?"

"I will tell you, she is the shameless and notorious Selina Harvey, whose name was before the public some time back."

"Sir George, what are you saying?" exclaimed a senior officer: "Miss Vernon can scarcely keep her seat."

"I suppose not: if I had that woman in my power I would impale her, hanging is too good."

"Colonel Phillips does not appear to have thought so."

"Oh, Madam, she has £3000 per annum, settled on her for life, independent of any one, and that hides her defects."

Mr. Leclerc smiled contemptuously: "Colonel Phillips is an honourable man."

"Yes, and a humane one," added Sir George, "he will give the gentle creature an opportunity of retrieving her place in society, but I say she ought to be scouted from it. You know, though an officer, I was never a duellist, and if anything could show its absurdity, it would be this. Captain H. demanded satisfaction, and he lost his life; true his adversary was wounded, and that further shows Mrs. Harvey's character. Her husband dead, and her victim soon the same, she marries Colonel Phillips in her maiden name, and thrusts herself into the society of women of virtue. Allow me to say, ladies, that, if you have any regard for decency, you will shun Mrs. Colonel Phillips, a lady who, in her thirtieth year, abandoned her husband and children with a youth of twenty-one. Miss Vernon will pardon this conversation, but it is better for her to hear of, than to meet, Mrs. Colonel Phillips; and she might, had she not have known under what designation she now appears."

"That is true," replied Miss Vernon, "but distressing recollections are revived by it. Mr. Leclerc, you will excuse my company this evening."

"Oh, certainly: had I been aware, I would not have exposed you to such an unpleasant occurrence. I would accompany you if I could leave." Mr. Leclerc said this in an under tone.

Laura bowed her adieus, and returned home with Mrs. Lempriere.

"Who is Miss V.?" enquired a lady, the wife of a respectable landed proprietor.

"I will tell you," replied Mr. Leclerc: "her grandfather was a clergyman, her father an officer, she lost him before she could recollect him, and was adopted, by her aunt, the widow of a general officer in the service of the East India Company."

The ladies were satisfied, and Mr. Lempriere, who had before been known only as the mediocre minister of one of the smallest parishes in the island, was invited by their husbands, and requested to bring his charming friend with him. Mr. Leclerc accepted many invitations in the expectation of meeting Miss V., but he did not; and he called to enquire the cause. Miss V. candidly stated it.

"The marquis," she observed, "has made a handsome provision for me; but I cannot go into company without receiving them in return, and my income will not allow me to do so. Neither do I wish to meet those military gentlemen; I know many of them, and mixing with them renews my grief."

Miss V. did look ill, and Mr. Leclerc seriously advised her to take care of her health. He became all at once very partial to the society of Mr. Lempriere, and the more he associated with him the more he wondered at the ignorance of his wife. Meeting Miss V. one morning while riding, he alighted, and, after some common conversation, remarked this to her. "I was myself surprized, but Miss Rolfe told a long history, the substance of which was that Mrs. Lempriere was a beautiful but spoilt child, Mr. L. became her husband, thinking he would be able to correct her errors, but she would not attend to his lectures. She is a kind-hearted and amiable woman,"

and, as she says, it perhaps was better for him that she was not a fine or a learned lady. Her blunders are the result of carelessness—she meant once to say that a person was egotistical, and she said, ‘I cannot bear him, he is so exotical.’

Mr. Leclerc smiled, and Miss Vernon eulogised the tenderness and the unceasing kindness of the unlearned Mrs. Lempriere. With her Mr. Leclerc was a great favourite, and as, according to his promise, he related many curious tales, he was always a welcome guest. Letters were forwarded to him from Dr. M—and his steward, and he asked himself why he staid at Jersey? He did not exactly know, but he did know that twenty-two months was an absence quite long enough from Parliament and his property. He bade his acquaintances a polite farewell, gave them his card; and, requesting they would visit him if they came to London, he returned to it, and thence wrote to Miss V. expressing his wishes for her health and happiness, saying that, if at any time he could oblige her, he should esteem himself favoured by her commands. To Mr. Lempriere he sent some expensive theological works, and a book of cookery to his wife.

Dr. M.—was well, and his spirits were better; he had discovered Gertrude’s relatives, and, finding them rather foolish than criminal, he commented upon their errors, relieved their wants, and gave them the means of regaining, in another country, the reputation which they had for ever lost in this. He had called on Mrs. Lumley, and found her, as usual, engaged in some plan which she thought saving.

“She ~~listened~~ listened to me, my dear Arthur, with indifference, said that she had foreseen that Gertrude would ruin herself, she was an idle, wasteful hussy, and an

angel from Heaven would not have saved her. I heard her patiently, and spoke to her of her soul: her answer was, 'I have been honest, sober, and industrious, I owe no one anything, and I thank God, I am not deficient in my duty to Him: as to my soul, that is in no danger. I advise you to take care of your own, if you do not know better than to encourage a—' But, Arthur, I will not repeat the names she called that poor girl: I was shocked and left her. Some time ago, I heard she was often attacked by illness, the consequence of her penurious habits; on those occasions the parish surgeon attended her; but, as they knew she had money, when she recovered, she was compelled to pay them. She was robbed by the paupers about her, and the constant occurrence of illness, brought on by over exertion and self-neglect, reduced her; and she died, three months back, in a state of the most abject poverty. Yet, with strange infatuation, she recommended her example as one for others to be guided by. Mrs. Jones died before her in the parish poor-house; she had made away with all she possessed, and was deeply in debt, when she sought admittance there. Which, my dear Arthur, shall we say is worse, Profusion or Avarice? each is bad, may we ever shun both, there is a middle way, and if we pursue that we shall be happy in ourselves, and a blessing to all around us. No children would execrate us, nor would our Redeemer say unto us, 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?' The wasteful expenditure of Mrs. Jones ruined her family, and rendered her daughter overcareful, and in Mrs. Lumley the love of money, supplanting her duty to God, and affection to her child, proved at last her own destruction. They rest in the grave; dare we trust our-

Mr. Leclerc sat at breakfast with his friend: the Doctor mused for some time, and then put down his coffee-cup, without having tasted its contents.

"Miss Vernon is vastly ironical: I thought, Arthur, that you did not admire satirical females."

"Nor do I, when their remarks originate in envy vanity or malevolence; but Miss Vernon's are untainted by any."

"They are not the less satirical, for that; converse on subjects suited to the meridian of her understanding."

Mr. Leclerc smiled: "You know, my dear sir, that ladies are not generally supposed to be acquainted with the subjects of which we were speaking. If I did not hold wagering a species of gambling, on that account unlawful, and likewise too low for gentlemen to practise, I would bet that Miss Vernon will not refuse, and you will be well matched, talented, independent in spirit, and quite as ironical as yourself—you will have your equal."

"How very strangely have you been linked with her and poor Gertrude! There is a great similarity between them."

"I have thought so before, sir, but in many things there exists great dissimilarity. I am not an enthusiast in my opinions on education. I believe there are dispositions so naturally bad that every attempt to improve them must fail; and I likewise believe that there are others which approach so nearly to the perfection, in which man was first moulded, that the most seductive efforts cannot corrupt them. But surely our children, or young relatives, the 'talents' especially entrusted to our care, ought not to be left to form ideas for themselves. It is the parent's or

guardian's duty strictly and unceasingly by precept to inculcate, and by example to enforce, the religious, the moral, and the social virtues of our state. And if, after all the care that can be taken for and with them, they stray from right, how ever much and deeply we may regret it, there will be no stings of conscience to disturb us, no bitter reflection—'If I had fulfilled my duty, they might not have failed in theirs.' I know you blame me for entertaining it, you call it an extreme opinion, but I am, in my mind and from experience, convinced that we should not meet with one twentieth of the vicious, the selfish, the weak, the unformed, characters, we do 'if parents acted as parents.' On them lies a heavy responsibility, may they duly estimate its weight! No two persons can more aptly illustrate my remarks than Gertrude and Miss Vernon. Vain, fond of arguing even for wrong, as giving her an opportunity of displaying the great colloquial abilities she undoubtedly possesses, careless and neglectful, Miss Vernon never denies the truth of the precepts which Mr. Morgan so laboriously inculcated; and when the mist of folly was dispelled from her mind, they guided her, as they ever will, triumphantly through the darkest hour of trial. Poor Gertrude was educated where forms are religion, an 'where kneeling is devotion,' and used to regard the due performance of ceremonies as all that was required: when she could not derive consolation from them, she doubted the truth of that religion to which they are merely appendages. Had she known that it was her imprescriptible right to appoint a guardian during her minority, how different might have been her life and death! But she was ignorant of law, and thought herself compelled to submit to those who said it sanctioned their acts."

"Suppose that she had been aware of her right, and had requested you to act, would you?"

"Yes."

"For, in that case I think it would have been a dangerous trust, and the affection she felt for you would have been returned."

"No: first impressions are generally decisive. I saw a beautiful, but a timid, ignorant, child, and, although she appeared to others, as she was, a lovely and captivating girl, I was too much accustomed to think and treat her as a child ever to have thought otherwise of her. She was much younger than I."

"How many years, Arthur?"

"Twelve."

"And how much younger than yourself is Miss Vernon?"

Mr. Leclerc calculated for an instant, and then said, "Nine."

"Well, there is not a great deal of difference: but I thought, Arthur, that, some fifteen years since, you said that you would never marry any lady ten or twenty years your junior."

"I said so, but—"

"But the truth is you are attached to Miss V., and this certainly reminds me of Addison's 'Haunted House,' where Abigail, at forty-five, is united to the steward."

"Why not?" said Mr. Leclerc smiling: "contracts for life ought not to be lightly entered into, and persons of middle age are more likely to possess mature judgment."

"Hum! Has fancy nothing to do with it? How often have you described the 'little less than angel' which your wife must be, if ever you should marry."

"I believe Laura fascinated me at first, and that, although I have not been conscious of it, it was the graceful Welsh girl that gave me the idea of those attractive portraitures I sketched."

Dr. M.—was silent; he had wished to find Gertrude a worthy relative; her long continuing affection for Mr. Leclerc in his opinion proved her good sense, and he very unreasonably felt angry with his friend for preferring another, arguing in his own mind, 'She loved him, and, knowing he would not return her affection, she gave way to despair.' Dr. M.—was an excellent, but upon some points a deeply prejudiced, man. Like most learned men, he held women aggregately in the greatest contempt, he conceived them utterly irreclaimable, and he was accustomed to remark that, when a female was a sensible and virtuous one, she ought to be most highly esteemed. Because, he would add, the chances are all against them. I am not so contemptible as to envy female superiority, I only regret that they are all so under the dominion of vanity and folly. A woman may be spirited without being a vixen. In Dr. M.—s opinion Gertrude was a noble-minded girl, he could not, because he would not, see any vanity or folly in her, prior to her elopement with Mr. Ellison; and he would not allow any merit in Miss V. because she was not Gertrude. Dr. M.—never considered what is, nevertheless, strictly true, that our affections are not in our own power; and though it is equally true that 'love attracts love,' gentlemen in general are more prone to laugh at than to return it. Mr. Leclerc was too good a man to act so, but at that moment Dr. M.—felt half inclined to read him a lecture on coquetry, but he did not indulge the wish, and terminated the conversation by saying:

"If comparisons are odious, contrasts are sometimes useful. Mrs. Lempriere and Miss V. are, in acquirements, totally dissimilar; and, though Mrs. L. is no doubt an excellent woman, no one can have Miss V. in her company without confessing her very fascinating. That much, Arthur, I will concede to you."

Mr. Leclerc smiled, and rose from the breakfast table to seek Miss V.: his interview with her terminated to his satisfaction; and, after passing the winter in Jersey, he returned to London with Dr. M.

When Mr. L. let Craystone Hall he knew that he should not, at least for some years, require it for a residence, and his motives for letting it were such as did him honour. "If," said he, "I leave a bailiff and servants there, their time will be spent in idleness, and my tenantry might be oppressed. If, on the contrary, I let it at a merely nominal rent, I shall ensure the residence of a respectable family, while my tenants will, in case of want, know to whom to apply." Mr. Leclerc fixed the rent at £250, just sufficient to remind the occupant that he was not the absolute owner. Mr. Leclerc now felt perplexed; he wished to reside at the Hall, and, as there was no alternative, he wrote to his tenant, saying, "That if the villa would be a convenient residence, he would resign it to him, until he could procure a more suitable one; or, if half the house would be sufficient, he should be always contented with the other." Mr. Walsh preferred the latter arrangement; and Mr. L. went down to superintend some alterations which he wished made.

From the changes at the Hall, and in Surrey, it was evident that Mr. L. contemplated matrimony: but, who was the lady? that was unknown, and remained

so until Laura Vernon was introduced to the fashionable world as Mrs. Arthur Leclerc. Dr. M. continued with them, and assisted in the education of Manvers and the Masters Rolfe.

One evening, when the children had retired, Mrs. Leclerc observed, "I have often thought that, if a collection was made of the answers which children give to questions, it would form a very amusing book."

"But not very edifying;" remarked her husband. "Alfred once told me a curious tale. Among the number of their London friends was a lady, whose relatives, together with herself, were influential persons belonging to a highly respectable Dissenting congregation. She, one evening, called upon a friend at their time of taking tea, generally about eight o'clock. She had with her one of her grandchildren, a little boy, five years of age. It was Saturday night; and the object of her visit was to solicit the company of one of the family on the following day. 'No, not to-morrow,' was the reply. 'Why? we shall not keep you from church.' 'I know that; but, you must excuse me. You will take some tea with us?' 'I have taken tea; we do not keep such wretched hours as you do.' 'Oh, you are quite primitive; but, having taken tea at four, and walked a mile since, you can take it again; and Edward will say grace.' 'What Saturday night?' said the child. 'My dear child,' said his interrogator, 'the meaning of the word Grace is to ask a blessing upon those provisions which are set before us, and to show that we thank God for them. And, as all the food we eat is given to us by God, it is proper to say a Grace before and after every meal, no matter at what time of the day it may be taken: now, Edward, say your Grace.'

"Saturday night I lost my wife."

"One loud and irrepressible burst of laughter from all present prevented the child's continuing; serious as the subject was, it was impossible to be serious. As soon as she could regain her breath, his grandmother enquired, 'And pray, sir, who taught you such a grace as that?' 'One of my school-fellows. I know another, about the Lord.' 'And that you should have said,' resumed his former lecturer. From this time, madam, I shall never think of Saturday night without remembering Edward's grace. I endeavoured to make myself intelligible to him by explaining the meaning, as simply as I could; for when he said 'what, Saturday night?' I thought he meant, 'what, am I to say grace on Saturday night?'"

Remarks on this story, and the imperative duty of impressing religion early on the mind, entertained the party during the remainder of the evening: and, in the morning, Mr. Leclerc received a letter from his cousin.

"Pray read it," said Dr. M: "I always like to hear of my former torment."

"My dear Arthur,

"'Were I,' says an author, 'to send you an account of the tea-table talk of the ladies here, of their intrigues and scandal, it would not interest the fair Penelope.' So, if I were to write you an account of the transactions here, of the Suttees and pilgrim-tax,* you would not only not be interested, but you would

* A tax imposed upon the worshippers of idols in India. It has been alleged that the persons employed to collect it by the East India Company gave every encouragement to the natives to continue their idolatrous and impure worship, on account of the revenue it produces. At least, this may be inferred from the letters of Mr. Poynder, published in the *TIMES* three or four years since.

be disgusted. So, not finding any more pleasant or important subject, I will write to you of myself.

"In the first place I am married, and to Lady Louisa Ellison. This will possibly surprize you ; but we live in an odd world, and strange events are every day occurring. Her ladyship, as you know, returned to India, and our former intimacy was renewed. I will not tell you how often Louisa lectured me, or how often she referred to my college follies. 'She had had enough of reform ;' was frequently her answer, and she begged me to be satisfied with it. But I was not ; and I at last wrung from her a promise that if ever she thought of a second marriage, it should be with no one but myself ; that was, if I could be contented with her esteem, for love she could not give. This was not mortifying to my vanity ; for I believe, with her ladyship, that the heart cannot twice cherish the passion we term love ; and, if she had asserted it, I should not have believed her. And I am more satisfied with possessing the esteem of such a woman as Lady Louisa than with all the feigned love of fashionable coquettes.

"We all enjoy perfect health : and I am charged and commanded to express a thousand kind wishes from all your friends. My own hope is that you, and my old acquaintance, and new cousin, are, and will continue, as happy as is,

Your affectionate cousin,

ALFRED WILLIAM LECLERC."

"That is quite characteristic," said Dr. M. ; "but, Arthur, this unexpected occurrence will disarrange our plans with respect to Manvers. We could not send him to your cousin, now that Lady Louisa is his wife."

"Very true, sir. I must consider the subject."

"I do not think that it requires much consideration," observed Mrs. Leclerc. "Why can you not change his name ? Although the one he now bears is his baptismal one, yet, as he can never inherit property, it is of little consequence by what appellation he is distinguished. His present names are so un-

common that they must point him out as their son to those who knew anything of his parents."

"You are very right," said the Doctor; "I will give him my name; I have no relations; and, if any one should ask questions, all that he has to say is that he is my adopted son, and a distant relation. Now, Mrs. Leclerc, find him a Christian name."

"Have you any objection to two, sir? What do you think of Frederic-Henry?"

"They will do. May he possess the valour and talent of the Prussian, and the meekness and piety of the English, monarch!"

Manvers and his young companions, John and Robert Rolfe, could not be made to comprehend the change of name, and some time elapsed before they could remember that they were to call him Frederic-Henry M.

Some time after her marriage, Mrs. Leclerc was much surprized, when, one morning, Sir George Peters called upon them. Mr. Leclerc received him politely, and, having talked to them some time, he addressed himself to Mrs. Leclerc.

"The papers have informed you of the self-caused death of Caroline's husband. Now, I thought I owed the poor girl some reparation for the seven years' misery I had caused her, by introducing her late husband to her father; and, as I thought her bad qualities must be corrected by this time, I rode over, got her brother to present me, and, after scolding and recriminating some three or four hours, Caroline and I became very good friends. You know I am too good a soldier to break my heart because I was once defeated; and, as you made so much better a choice, I persuaded Caroline to try what she could make of

me. I have now a favour to ask—will you forget Caroline Melsom, and receive Lady Peters as a friend?"

"Ask Mr. Leclerc," said Laura, looking at her husband.

"You are very well qualified to decide for yourself, Laura."

"Then, Sir George, meaning no disrespect to you, I will decline seeing her ladyship. She is so very flighty and unthinking that I fear her observations would be productive of evil. And I must request that you will not now claim my promise of always thinking you a friend."

"I always shall."

"But, if you came here, Lady Peters would not hesitate to say that I encouraged her husband to desert her; and such remarks would pain Mr. Leclerc, as well as myself."

"You are still thinking of Caroline Melsom—I assure you she is changed. Her temper has been tried; and she has received, herself, too many insults ever again to wound the feelings of any one. She knows me too careless to be long attentive to any thing; and though, before your husband, I will tell you that I would rather have claimed you as my wife, I will likewise tell you that, when you chose to convince me of the truth of your rejection, by accepting Mr. Leclerc, I was not going to lament it, nor fight a duel, soldier though I am. Mr. L. will not, surely, do himself so much injustice as to be jealous of me; he must be well aware that, where he chose to be a suitor, every other must be distanced. Had I never written that unlucky letter, you would have received me as an acquaintance; now, when I am married, and on the level of one, you object to seeing me and

my wife, although she is sincerely sorry for the unkindness which she manifested towards you."

Mrs. Leclerc looked embarrassed.

"Can you not answer Sir George, Laura?" said Mr. Leclerc, looking at her.

"Yes. If Lady Peters will call on me, I will see her."

When the baronet left, Mrs. Leclerc doubtfully said, "I do not know whether my decision has pleased you, Arthur: would you prefer my refusal?"

"I told you to decide for yourself, but if I must speak, I had rather that you did not see Sir George, except in general company. The fact of his attachment to you is well known, and, although I believe what he says, I do not feel very much at ease in his society."

Laura was too much attached to her husband to contradict him, and, though she always politely received Lady Peters, she never accepted her invitations or those of any member of her family. Mr. Melsom possessed at times a short memory, he forgot Laura Vernon and her trials, but perfectly remembered Mrs. Leclerc, and commissioned his daughter to request the favour of her company.

Mrs. Leclerc was not surprised, she coolly answered, "No, Caroline, I do not now act for myself, I have Mr. Leclerc to consult, and you know he will not accept any invitation from your father."

"You have altered greatly, Laura. Your disposition, a few years back, was not so compliant."

"O, because I pleased myself from self-love, I now love my husband, and to obey him is pleasure."

"And will you say that you married Mr. Leclerc from that ridiculous, romantic preference, which you

always asserted you must cherish, before you would become a wife?"

"Caroline, our acquaintance was not that of a day: for whom did I manifest affection?"

"Certainly for no one."

"I did not feel it, therefore could not show it, and at the time you so ridiculed me you knew that I rather disliked, than admired, Sir George."

"Oh, that is an old, forgiven offence, Laura."

"Yes, but not forgotten, Caroline: and I do not now remind you of it from any revengeful feeling, but, changed as you are, you still possess something of the same spirit, and I do wish to guard you against it. Suppose Sir George had been a vain, dissipated man, he would possibly have ceased visiting at your father's, and if asked why, have replied, 'I can't see Miss Vernon, the poor girl is in love with me, and charity says, keep away.' It is no excuse for your conduct to say that Sir George would not and did not act so, you placed me at his mercy, and what alternative had I? I must either accept a person I did not like, or I must labour under the stigma of being held in contempt by him. Sir George offered me many opportunities of refuting this rumour, and gave himself a claim upon my gratitude and highest esteem, but it was not love, Caroline, and I now know that I did right."

"Why refuse to visit us?"

"Because I fear your lurking propensity for scandal, and because I will not lay myself open to censure. With what feelings should I read such a paragraph as this, 'The fashionable world is regulated on curious principles, the wife of a highly distinguished member of the Lower House is in the habit of visiting at the house of Sir George P——, who was formerly one of

her humble admirers ;' or, 'The beautiful wife of a rich and gallant baronet is said to be much neglected by her husband, who is a constant visitor at the house of a long celebrated M.P., to whose fascinating lady he was once said to be much attached.'"

"I thought you were above such nonsense."

"I hope I am, but, Caroline, I will not give any one an opportunity of maligning me, or of casting reflections upon my conduct; we ought to avoid every action which will bear two constructions, and I have always thought that no remark ever originated in complete malice. Perfectly aware of what I am saying, I will assert that no person was ever accused without giving some ground for the accusation. In a spirit of unfeminine jest, you falsely described me to your present husband; but were I now to seek his society, it would be directly said that I married Mr. Leclerc because I could not Sir George."

The tears of Lady Peters fell fast on the hand of her former friend, she knew how much vexation she had caused her, and again repeated that she was sincerely sorry for it. Miss V. had endured great anguish, many had ridiculed her, and some, with a too common affectation of feeling, lamented her indiscretion, and besought her to act for the future with more propriety. It was in vain that she declared that Miss Melsom jested, it was entirely useless to protest that she was not attached to the baronet, no one believed her, and yet at the time she held the most respectful letters written by him, who it was said thought of her with contempt. There appeared but one way of silencing her tormentors, and that was by receiving the attentions Sir George so much wished to pay her, but she shrunk with horror from the idea. To perjure herself

in the sight of the Almighty, to profess attachment she never could feel, appeared no light acts to her; and then should she accept, Sir George, and, after her marriage, become acquainted with some estimable person whom she could love, what then would be her fate? 'O, no,' she exclaimed, 'let me not be such a wretch, mere duty is at all times a harsh law, and I know myself too well not to feel that I should spurn it. Let me endure these evils, they will last but a little while, and hope will invigorate me: hope, who would live without it? Tell a man to resign-it, and you tell him to be an infidel, for as it is the charm of life, so also it is the substance of religion. We hope that in better worlds we shall forget this changeful, troubled scene, and shall I, from an apprehension of its evils, dare solemnly to utter falsehood, and delude one whose noble conduct towards me deserves something more than base and heartless deception! Could I live a continual life of it, could I guard my lips, and disguise the sentiments of my mind? No; and as I wish not to be deceived, neither will I deceive.'

She found the justness of her resolutions, when the unceasing attentions of Mr. Leclerc became necessary to her peace, and she found that, in rejecting others, she had consulted her and their happiness. If these were her feelings, and the conviction of having acted justly rendered her entirely happy, how much more thankful was she when the French Revolution of July flung the country again into anarchy, and placed those with whom she must have been connected in the centre of civil war, and its attendant horrors! Had she gone to France, she must have been wretched in the family of the Marquis; and, to escape the taunts of children, and the contempt of his lady, she might

have formed some dazzling, but miserable, alliance; the young Marquis, faithful to his father's principles, adhered to the Duke of Orleans; her husband and friends might have chosen the party of Charles X., and she have been distracted by opposing sentiments, and finally, perhaps, have had to seek assistance in her native country, from the cold hand of charity. She would then have been a stranger to her beloved husband and his estimable friends, or, had she known them, she must also have known that, by yielding to the dictates of interest and ambition, she had rendered herself unworthy of their regard.

Perhaps some similar ideas passed through the mind of Mr. Leclerc, as, laying down the papers of the first days of August, he said, "Laura, it was well you did not go to France."

"It was; when will that unhappy country be free from disturbance!"

"Never, I fear, my love: but it is useless to dwell on these melancholy events, let us do what good we can, and leave the rest. I have letters this morning from my cousin, he says that Major-General Leclerc intends to return to England, and spend five or six years here, should he survive so long. We must therefore prepare for them."

Mrs. Leclerc cheerfully gave the necessary orders, and, in the seventy-second year of his age, the Major-General for the first time saw his nephew. Lady Leclerc, always fond of Mr. Ellison's relatives, spent many weeks with them, and in return, they visited her at Craystone-hall. While Mrs. Fitzmaurice was staying with her husband's relations, Lady Louisa corresponded with her, and was so minute in her descriptions that Mrs. Fitzmaurice was fully informed

of circumstances and sentiments, as though she had been present.

"My Dear Clara,

"Craystone-hall, Sept. 12th.

"Yesterday was Mrs. Leclerc's birth-day, and we were, of course, very gay; yet, in the midst of festivity, your brother and I had a long, and somewhat angry, argument. He wrote some verses, which he wished to present to Mrs. L., and I positively said he should not. 'If Mrs. L. can forget the trials of her early life, why should he remind her of them?' 'Why, it was a token of esteem for her.' 'Very true indeed, but the sympathy which induces persons to recur to sorrows past is a wrong one. At the time, condole with, and assist, your friends; but do not afterwards pain them by a reference to their trials.' My arguments at last prevailed, and I send the verses to you. You see they commence when Mrs. Leclerc, the fashionable Miss V., was the 'observed of all observers,' 'the idol of one sex, and the envy of the other.'

I saw her in her hour of mirth,
When all the world calls good was hers,
When her beauteous brow, her beaming eye,
Were rivalled only by flowers

Of pearl and diamond which she wore
Euwreathed amid her golden hair;
And many a proud one round her pressed
And many a noble called her fair.

I saw her, in her hour of sorrow,
When the world's wealth had flown away—
I saw her bend o'er her only brother,
And with tears bedew th' unconscious clay.

I saw her, and the smile of Peace
O'er her wan cheek was stealing;
For Time, with gently lenient hand,
The wounds of her soul was healing.

I saw her, and no smile
Of Mirth or Peace was there;
But that calm look of heartfelt joy
The truly happy wear.

She sat ; and her snowy hand
 An infant's head supported—then
 A wife and a mother she—
 The happy wife of the best of men.

I see thee now, my Cousin,
 On this her natal day ;
 And I with thee, with joy,
 For its return will pray.

And, as time passes on,
 May you fresh blessings see,
 And I this wish will form—
 May I your poet be.

Some author, D'Israeli, I think, affirms that a man may be a poet, although he may be unable to write verse ; and Alfred coincides with him. Do not say anything to me—I will never spoil the rhyme for the metre, he once observed ; and, indeed, in pieces that are read it is of little importance, but he was once sadly out ; he arranged some verses for me, but I found it impossible to play them, as some of the lines were of fourteen syllables, others six.

Sept. 14th. I give you the substance of a conversation between Alfred and your cousin. ' I highly approve of your plan, with respect to Frederick and his companions, and I rejoice at the prospect of superintending their exertions. I have ever condemned the conduct of the East India Company—while their servants oppose the introduction of Dissenting Missionaries, they throw every impediment in the way of Episcopalians. I hope that, should any motion be made to increase the number of dignified clergymen in the Peninsula, you will strenuously support it.' ' Undoubtedly I shall, Alfred. It is lamentable to reflect that, while we drain India of its wealth, we attempt not the conversion of its countless idolaters: A great deal of apathy exists in this country with reference to that.' ' There does, Arthur. And I blush for them, when I hear persons eulogize the meekness and virtues of the aborigines—What is their common saying ? " It is better to sit than to walk, to lie down than to sit, to sleep than to lie down, and death is the best of all." They have all that morbidity that everywhere produces such ill effects ; they have no motive to

action, therefore they are inert ; they yield to the influence of despair, because hope is forbidden them. By the way, Arthur, how is it that we do not see the Signora Orsini and her sister ?' 'One of my packets informed you of my becoming Frederic's guardian : I was so incensed at her and her sisters' conduct to his deeply unfortunate mother, that I ceased to regard them as friends. In general company, and when "all the world" is invited, we mix with them, and the Peters' ; but in that company of friends of which your family are the dearest, we cannot find place for the insincere and frivolous. Life is too short to be wasted ; and to each state of it pertain peculiar duties. You, and in our public stations we, have at present many distressing and arduous ones to discharge ; but, in leaving public strife, we have the satisfaction of returning to a happy home where, in endeavouring to fulfil our duties, we have a foretaste of that happiness which, we believe, will be enduring in another and a better world. And who, my dear Alfred, would exchange this real happiness, this glorious prospect, for the fading dignities of the world, or its hollow and delusive, its often guilty, pleasures ?' Certainly, my dear Clara, no sensible being would. The history of Frederic was concealed from me, but vainly ; and I love the child, because the son of one whom I did most sincerely love. While I live, Frederic shall never feel himself an orphan. I am thankful that I have no children, for I fear I should prove a sad instructress ; but I will endeavour to watch over that boy, and protect him. He goes with us to India, and I approve of Mrs. Leclerc's motives. She has daughters, and I who know the strength of early attachment, and should not wish such a husband for my daughter, am not surprized she should wish to avoid such a contingency. She has governesses for her daughters, and I think Miss Manvers' history quite sufficient to justify her. I would no more choose a tutor for my daughter than a governess for my son. The attention necessarily given to an instructor is the first and surest step to affection. It is in childhood that the heart is ungarded ; pride, vanity, the thousand feelings that influence us in after life, have then no place there ; and I am sure that more females fall in love, as it is termed, from twelve to eighteen than from eighteen to twenty, the years generally considered the most dangerous.

Feb. 21st, I take up my pen to conclude my rambling epistle, and I do it tranquilly ; but, as you will anticipate, not joyfully. I have not been myself since we lost Dr. M— and Mr. Lempriere ; and, indeed, the only consolation we all find is the conviction that they are now receiving the reward of their useful and Christian lives. Time is slowly and imperceptibly reducing all to one common level. The prince and the peasant, the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, must all die. The hand that writes these lines will moulder into dust : and the eye that scans them will lose its powers of perceptibility, and, after us, generations will live, and be each, in its turn, forgotten. Balaam said " Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." May we, my dear Clara, all and ever recollect that ' to die the death ' we must ' live the life ' of the righteous. " Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

THE END.

WIPPS-BRIDGE, MITCHAM.

